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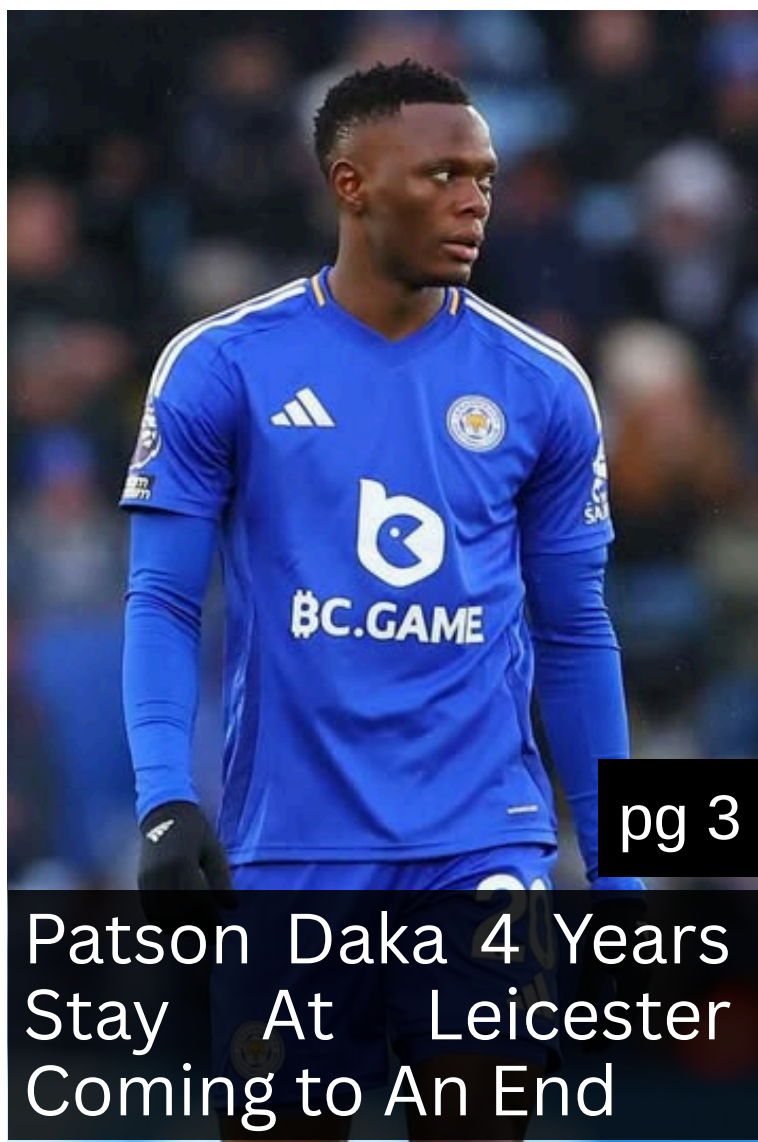


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PATSON DAKA’S LEICESTER CITY JOURNEY: A TALE OF RESILIENCE AND REVIVAL

By Joseph Tembo



Since his £22 million move from Red Bull Salzburg to Leicester City in 2021, Zambian striker Patson Daka’s tenure at the King Power Stadium has been marked by both challenges and moments of brilliance.

Daka’s debut season showcased his potential, notably with five goals in six UEFA Europa League appearances, including a memorable four-goal haul against Spartak Moscow. Domestically, he contributed five Premier League goals in 23 appearances, often coming off the bench.

The 2022–23 season proved challenging as Leicester faced relegation from the Premier League. Daka managed four goals in 30 league appearances, struggling to

secure a consistent starting role. The arrival of manager Enzo Maresca saw Daka initially sidelined, with Jamie Vardy and Kelechi Iheanacho preferred in attack. A potential transfer fell through on deadline day, leaving Daka to fight for his place.

A turning point came in December 2024 when injuries opened the door for Daka’s return to the starting lineup. He seized the opportunity, scoring against Plymouth and Millwall, and went on to net seven goals and provide three assists in nine league appearances. His contributions were pivotal in Leicester’s push for promotion, with the team leading the Championship by 11 points at one stage.

Despite club-level challenges, Daka

remained a key figure for Zambia. He made history by scoring in every Africa Cup of Nations age category, culminating in a goal during the senior team’s draw against Tanzania in January 2024. His international tally stands at 20 goals in 43 appearances, placing him eighth on Zambia’s all-time scorers list.

Daka’s journey at Leicester City underscores his resilience and determination. From early promise to periods of adversity, he has demonstrated the ability to adapt and overcome challenges. As Leicester aims for Premier League promotion, Daka’s form and experience could prove invaluable in the club’s quest for top-flight football

NATIONAL LEAGUE NEEDS SPONSORSHIP - MWEEMBA

By Fultime Desk



Aspiring Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) presidential candidate Keith Mweemba has observed that participating in the National League remains a costly endeavor for most clubs in Zambia.

Mweemba notes that the lack of sponsorship for the second tier of club football hinders clubs' ability to efficiently and effectively manage football operations.

"Despite being the second tier of men's club football in Zambia, the National League still remains one of the most expensive leagues to compete in mainly due to lack of proper sponsorship," Mweemba noted.

He pledged to secure sponsorship for the National League.

"My administartion and I, will come up with a workable solution that will benefit everyone while maintaining the high competitiveness of the league."

The reconvened Elective FAZ AGM will be held on Friday, May 9, in Kabwe.

Mweemba, the FC MUZA proprietor, is challenging incumbent FAZ president Andrew Kamanga for the top job at Football House.

Other candidates are Adrian Kashala and Emmanuel Munaile.

ZAMBIA’S U17 STAR HELLEN BANDA EYES BRIGHT FUTURE AFTER WORLD CUP QUALIFICATION

By Lucky Chama



Zambia Under-17 Women’s national team midfielder Hellen Banda believes qualification to the U17 Women’s World Cup is a life-changing opportunity.

She was part of the team that defeated Benin 4-1 in the U17 Women’s World Cup qualifiers on Saturday, concluding the second leg with a 6-2 aggregate victory. The outcome confirmed Zambia’s qualification for the U17 Women’s World Cup, following their 2024 appearance in the Dominican Republic.

During an interview, Hellen expressed her excitement about being part of the team that qualified for the World Cup, marking her first time participating in this global event. She believes that participating in the tournament will be a life-changing opportunity that can positively impact both her football career and her family.

“What came to my mind was

qualification for the World Cup; we wanted it the most,” she said. “It wasn’t an easy game, but we were motivated by the prospects of playing at the World Cup. It will be my first time at the World Cup. I’m happy because the World Cup is a big stage; it can change my life and that of my parents.”

Hellen also noted that the qualifiers were tough compared to the COSAFA Under-17 Championship, adding that teamwork was key to achieving qualification.

“It was tough playing the World Cup qualifiers compared to the COSAFA. We played some strong teams, but we worked together as a team. I thank God that we have qualified for the World Cup.”

Zambia joins Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Cameroon and host Morocco at this year’s U17 Women’s World Cup to be played from 17 October to 8 November, 2025.



PATSON DAKA 4 YEARS STAY AT LEICESTER COMING TO AN END

By John Mbabala



Patson Daka looks set to leave Leicester City this summer as the club begins a major overhaul ahead of next season.

The Zambian striker, who arrived from Red Bull Salzburg in 2021, has struggled to replicate the prolific form he showed in Austria. At Salzburg, Daka scored 54 goals in just 82 games, helping the club to four league titles and three Austrian Cups.

However, life in the Premier League has proven far more challenging.

Premier League Struggles

Since joining the Foxes, Daka has managed just 17 goals in 107 appearances. Injuries and

inconsistent performances have derailed his progress, and the 26-year-old’s time at the King Power appears to be drawing to a close.

According to SportsBoom, Daka will leave Leicester in the upcoming transfer window. Everton are reportedly among the clubs keeping tabs on the forward, as they look to strengthen their attack for the new season.

Fresh Start Needed

Daka missed a significant portion of the campaign due to ankle surgery and managed only one goal in 22 outings. With Leicester relegated back to the Championship, the striker is keen to remain in England’s top flight.

He is said to be eager for a fresh start and believes he still has more to offer in the Premier League.

Foxes Planning Rebuild

Leicester are preparing for life without Jamie Vardy, who will depart at the end of the season after 13 legendary years at the club. Signing a new striker is now a top priority, and the Foxes are looking to cash in on Daka before his contract expires next summer.

At just 26, Daka still has time on his side. But after a disappointing spell in England, the next move in his career could prove decisive.

NJOVU CONFIDENT AS ZAMBIA GEARS UP FOR ZAMBEZI RUGBY SHOWDOWN WITH ZIMBABWE

By Lucky Chma



The coach of Zambia’s rugby national team, Lawrence Njovu, is optimistic about his team’s prospects of defeating Zimbabwe in this weekend’s Zambezi Challenge.

At the Harare Sports Club on Sunday, the Copper Eagles and Sables will square off.

The technical bench has announced a 41-member squad for the Series tournament. The team has notable names such as captain Ali Bhika, Rodgers Mukupa, Lawrence Lesa, Chilufya Bwalya and Mphatson Mwashi.

Njovu claims that because of their recent performance, the Zambian rugby team has the potential to defeat the Zimbabwean team.

“Looking at the last two games we had last year, I think we have a lot of confidence because, for me, we had beaten them in the last game had it not been for the referees errors. We could have carried the day. Even our performance in Zimbabwe was surprising. Our boys put up a good fight, and the expectation this year is high. And I feel we can carry the day this time around,” Njovu said.

Njovu also disclosed that the team has combined experience and youth for the forthcoming game.

“Looking at the team, we have got a combination of experience and youths; we have about 11 youths coming into the team. So that combination gives us the confidence,” he said.

“Looking at the experience we have as well, we have a lot of experience. We have players who have been there for almost a decade. And we are the most capped team on the African continent. So we have that experience, and we have the capabilities to challenge them.”

Meanwhile, the Zimbabwe Rugby Union announced a 40-man squad selected by Head Coach Pieter Benade for the Zambezi Series. The Union reveals that this year’s series shines a spotlight on local talent, with all selected players based in Zimbabwe and primed to carry the torch for the national team in front of home crowds.

Zimbabwean Team Manager Takunda Chifokoyo stated, “Our locally based players have been working together, and some great combinations have formed. We are pretty excited about Zambia and Botswana.

“The Battle of the Zambezi won’t have a dull moment—this is our showcase to local fans, and we thrive off their support.”

The campaign kicks off on 4 May when Zimbabwe faces Zambia at Harare Sports Club, followed by a showdown against Botswana on 10 May in Harare.

NATIONAL TEAM COACH EYES GROWTH AMID MOST COMPETITIVE SEASON YET

By Lucky Chama



Zambia Futsal is set to benefit from a planned visit of a Spanish physical trainer at the close of next month.

During the break, the players and coaches will receive training in new and modern techniques overseen by Enrique ‘Chicho’ Ibanez Ramos.

In an exclusive interview with FullTime, Futsal national team coach Andrea Cristoforetti disclosed that the visit of Chicho will culminate in a physical training course.

“So overall we closed the season now; at the end of the month we’ll have the physical trainer of Spain,” Cristoforetti said.

games in the league. It’s the only two games we’ve lost in the whole season, so we were ready for the battle, and I was very curious to see also my boys, how they would mentally react,” Cristoforetti said.

“The truth is we prepared well, and the games went our way from the beginning in both games. In the first game, there were two, actually three, key players missing for them. So, let’s say it was probably easier. In the second game, they came with a full squad because they had also been red-carded in the first final, Game 1, so the second game was more competitive.”

Cristoforetti has also observed that the season has been competitive as the winning margins have reduced in the Premier League.

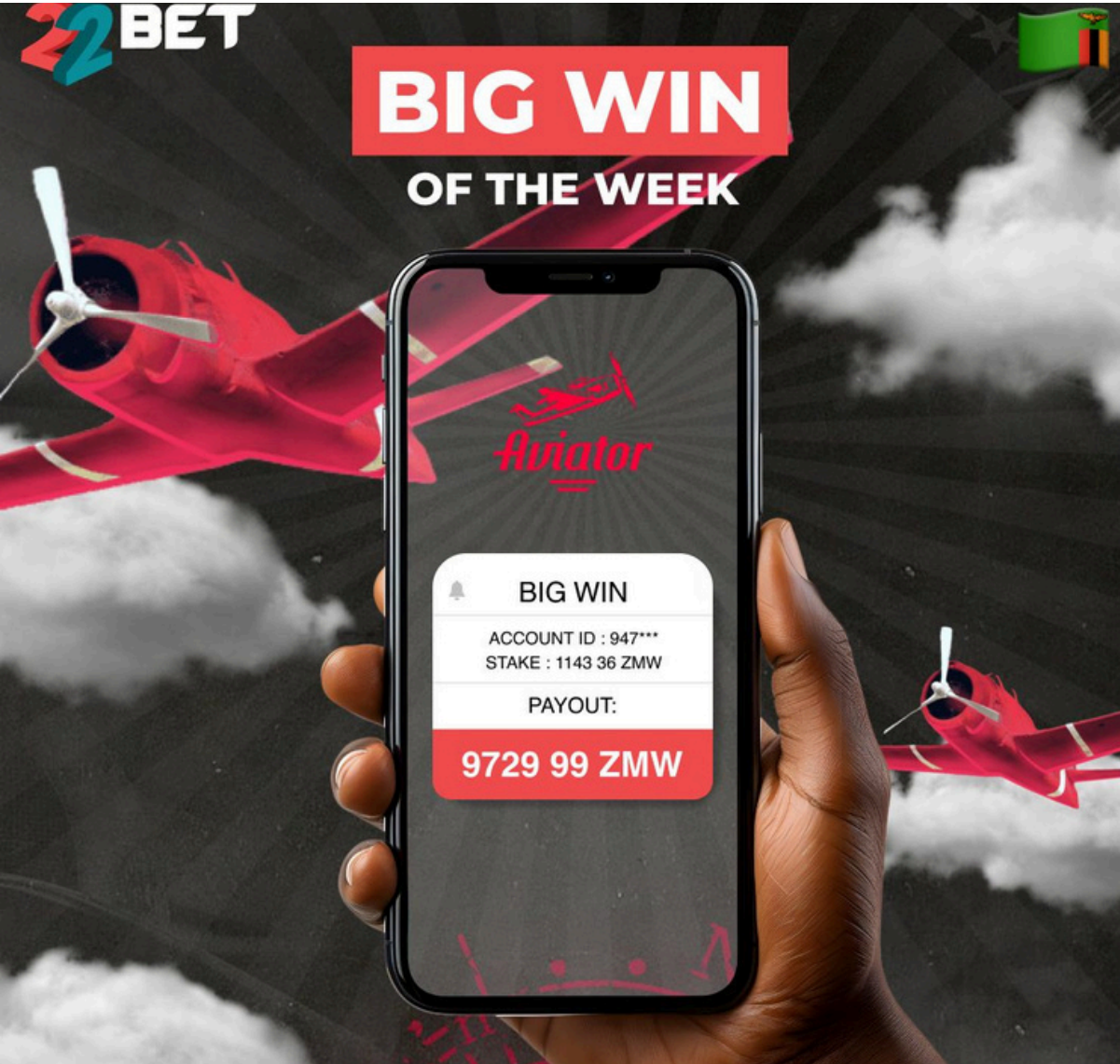
“We’ve witnessed, season by season, a growth, like little steps forward. This season particularly has been the most competitive so far. In the past, Automotive would often win by large margins, like 10-1 or 12-2, even in the finals. And I have to say the gap is closing, which is great,” he stated.

“So it has been really, really the most competitive season so far. The gap is closing really, and throughout the new camps that we’re doing, I’m trying to call more and more players. We have, at the moment, quite a wide and big group of players that we will prepare for the next international competition.”

The FAZ Premier Futsal League season concluded on 23rd April, and Cristoforetti guided LSK Automatic to a recorded eighth title.

They beat CSS Petauke, though Cristoforetti noted that competition was tough throughout the season. He states that it was not an easy finale, as CSS Petauke managed to beat his side in the regular season matches.

“Against CSS Petauke, we lost both



U-20 AFCON 2025: SIERRA LEONE AND SOUTH AFRICA SECURE VITAL WINS IN GROUP A

By Joseph Tembo



The 2025 TotalEnergies U-20 Africa Cup of Nations continued on Wednesday, April 30, with two pivotal Group A matches that reshaped the standings.

Sierra Leone 4-1 Egypt
Sierra Leone delivered a commanding performance against host nation Egypt, securing a 4-1 victory at the Suez Canal Stadium. Ibrahim Kamara was the standout player, netting a remarkable hat-

trick to propel his team to the top of Group A. This result places Sierra Leone in a strong position for qualification to the knockout stages, while Egypt faces increased pressure in their upcoming fixtures .

South Africa 1-0 Tanzania
Earlier in the day, South Africa earned their first points of the tournament with a narrow 1-0 win over Tanzania. Shakeel April scored the decisive goal, reigniting South

Africa's hopes of advancing in the competition. The loss was a setback for Tanzania, who missed the opportunity to lead the group .

With these outcomes, Sierra Leone leads Group A, followed by Egypt, South Africa, Zambia, and lastly Tanzania. The group stage continues to promise intense competition as teams vie for a spot in the semi-finals and a chance to qualify for the 2025 FIFA U-20 World Cup in Chile .

YAMAL STARS IN BARCELONA'S 3-3 THRILLER WITH INTER

By Joseph Tembo



Barcelona and Inter Milan played out a pulsating 3-3 draw in the first leg of their UEFA Champions League semi-final, setting the stage for a dramatic decider at the San Siro.

Inter stunned the hosts just 30 seconds in when Marcus Thuram cleverly backheeled Denzel Dumfries' low cross to score the fastest goal ever recorded in a Champions League semi-final. Dumfries then doubled the Italians' lead with a spectacular overhead kick in the 20th minute, silencing the home crowd at the Montjuïc Olympic Stadium.

But 17-year-old Lamine Yamal led Barcelona's fightback with a

brilliant solo goal just four minutes later. The teenage sensation weaved past defenders before curling in a left-footed strike that clipped the post and went in. He later hit the woodwork twice and marked his 100th appearance for the club with a standout performance.

Barcelona equalised in the 38th minute when Ferran Torres pounced on Raphinha's headed assist to make it 2-2. Inter regained the lead in the second half through Dumfries, who headed home from a Calhanoglu corner to complete his brace.

However, Barça hit back almost immediately. Raphinha's long-range thunderbolt struck the bar and

ricocheted in off goalkeeper Yann Sommer's back to tie the match again at 3-3.

The match was an exhilarating display of attacking football, with both teams showcasing their strengths —Barcelona through fluid creativity and Inter through clinical finishing and set-piece prowess. Henrikh Mkhitaryan thought he had given Inter the win late on, but his goal was ruled offside by the narrowest of margins.

With everything still to play for, the second leg in Milan promises another epic night of European football. All eyes will be on Yamal, whose Messi-like flair continues to capture imaginations across Europe.

DRAPER BEATS PAUL TO REACH MADRID OPEN LAST EIGHT

By BBC



An authoritative Jack Draper booked his place in the quarter-finals of the Madrid Open with a convincing 6-2 6-2 win against Tommy Paul.

The British number one broke the American in the third and seventh games and served out to love to take the first set in 32 minutes.

Paul's serve was being put under the greater pressure and, while he saved two break points in the third game of the second set, Draper broke him to love in the fifth game to go 3-2 up.

A stunning forehand down the line put Draper 5-2 and a double break ahead and he comfortably won the next game on his serve to win the match in one hour and seven minutes.

"I felt really good out there," Draper told Sky Sports. "I know Tommy is a great player and I had to be on him from the off. I felt good.

"I think probably for the players who are from the UK or who don't play on this surface often, they go into it

with the mindset they are not going to be that great on it and, therefore, that can prevent them going further.

"I know I can play well on this surface and this year it's been a big goal of mine to prove that I can play really well. I know that if I want to be a top player that I have to."

The powerful forehand of Draper, who did not face a break point in the match, was in good working order throughout as he hit 13 of his 20 winners with it.

Paul only managed seven winners in the match, while he made 31 unforced errors compared to 11 from his opponent.

Draper, who is at a career-high sixth in the world rankings, is the fifth seed at the Madrid Open and the highest ranked player remaining. He will play Matteo Arnaldi in the last eight after the Italian, who knocked out Novak Djokovic, beat Frances Tiafoe 6-3 7-5 and Draper can move to number five in the men's rankings if he wins.

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