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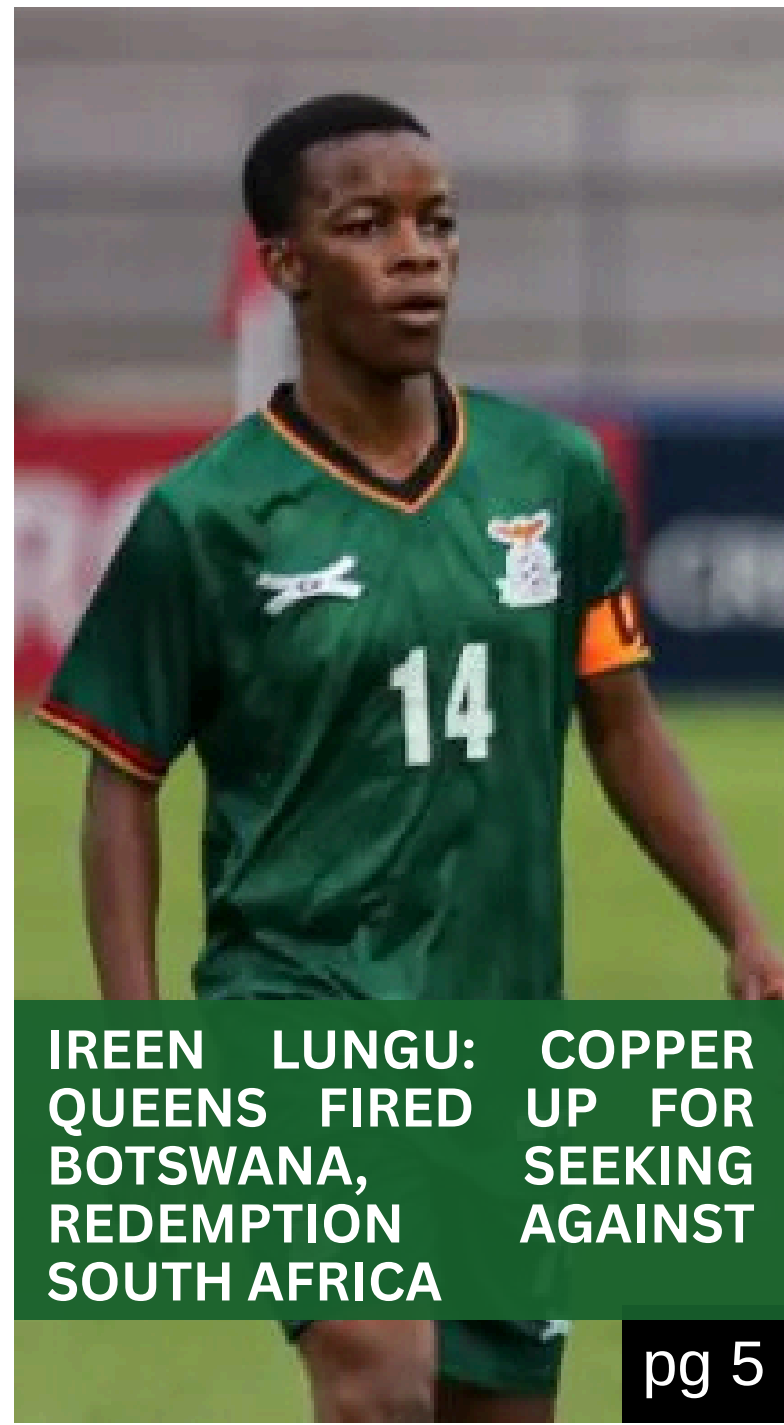
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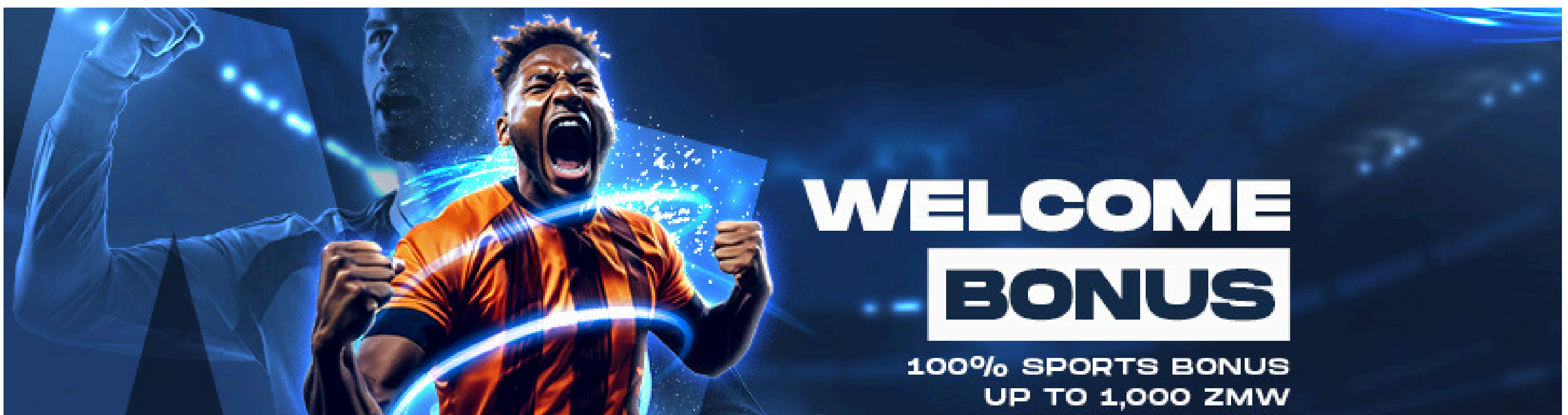
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ZAMBIA EYES REDEMPTION AT 2025 COSAFA CUP AFTER HISTORIC SETBACK

By Fulltime Reporter



As the countdown begins to the 2025 HOLLYWOODBETS COSAFA Cup, the Zambian national team, Chipolopolo, enters the regional tournament with history on their side but redemption on their minds.

After a shock exit in the group stage of the 2024 edition, where Zambia suffered three straight losses, including defeats to Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Comoros, the seven-time COSAFA champions are determined to bounce back.

“Zambia’s performance last year was one of the worst in the tournament’s history,” COSAFA stated on their official website. “But if there’s any team that knows how to recover, it’s Zambia.”

A Legacy of Success

Zambia remains the most decorated

team in COSAFA Cup history, having claimed titles in 1997, 1998, 2006, 2013, 2019, 2022, and 2023. Their consistency has made them a dominant force in Southern African football. They’ve reached the final 10 times and boast a competitive all-time record of 73 matches, 36 wins, 22 draws, and 15 losses, with an impressive 100 goals scored.

From Setback to Comeback

The 2024 campaign marked a historic low, with Zambia enduring their longest losing streak in COSAFA Cup history, three consecutive losses, and failing to score in any of the group matches. But the Chipolopolo are looking to rebuild, with renewed energy and focus under new leadership at the Football Association of Zambia (FAZ), now headed by President Keith Mweemba.

Road to Glory

Zambia’s COSAFA journey has seen its share of ups and downs, from early dominance to painful penalty exits and stunning finals. But their back-to-back victories in 2022 and 2023 showed a resurgence that fans hope to see again in 2025.

As the tournament draws near, attention will turn to player selections, coaching strategy, and preparations, all aimed at reclaiming regional glory and restoring the pride of a footballing powerhouse.

With the 2025 edition promising fierce competition, the question remains: Can Zambia rise again?

One thing is certain, history, pressure, and passion will all take the field when Chipolopolo returns to chase their eighth COSAFA crown.

KANGWA CROWNED BEST FOREIGN PLAYER IN ISRAEL, EYES STATE CUP GLORY AND NATIONAL TEAM RETURN

By Joseph Tembo



Zambian midfielder Kings Kangwa has been voted the Best Foreign Player of the Year in the Israeli Premier League, capping off a sensational season with Hapoel Be’er Sheva. The 25-year-old playmaker was also named in the Best XI of the Season, solidifying his status as one of the league’s most influential stars.

Kangwa’s exceptional campaign saw him register 14 goals and 9 assists in 35 league matches, making him the most productive Zambian player abroad this season. His dynamic performances helped Be’er Sheva push the title race to the final day, ultimately finishing second, just two

points behind champions Maccabi Tel Aviv.

Reacting to the award, Kangwa took to social media to share his gratitude:

“BEST FOREIGN PLAYER OF THE YEAR, AND THE BEST TEAM OF THE YEAR... thanks to everyone who voted for me.”

Despite the heartbreak of narrowly missing out on the league title, Kangwa and Be’er Sheva have one more shot at silverware this season. On 29 May, they will face Beitar Jerusalem in the Israel State Cup Final, with Kangwa expected to play

a pivotal role once again. He has already made his mark in the cup, scoring once in three appearances en route to the final.

Kangwa’s all-around game has earned praise across the league. He ranked 3rd in successful dribbles (1.8 per game), 19th in tackles (2.1 per game), and stood out for his aggressive, fearless style of play. Though he didn’t score from free kicks, he was a constant threat and a creative spark for Be’er Sheva throughout the campaign.

In addition to his club success, Kangwa has been named in coach Avram Grant’s 25-man provisional squad for Zambia’s upcoming international friendlies against Morocco, scheduled for June 6 and 10 in Morocco. The matches are part of the Chipolopolo’s preparations for the September round of FIFA World Cup qualifiers, where Zambia will host Morocco before facing Tanzania and Niger in October.

With national and club duties calling, Kings Kangwa’s incredible season is far from over. From individual accolades to a potential cup triumph and a return to the international stage, the Zambian midfield maestro continues to shine.

CRFA SETS CAF B LICENSE AS MINIMUM REQUIREMENT FOR CHIPIKU LEAGUE TEAMS

By Edwin Mbewe



In order to enhance technical standards and professionalism, the Central Region Football Association (CRFA) has announced that all teams participating in the Chipiku Stores Premier Division League will be required to engage coaches holding a CAF B License or higher starting from the 2026 season.

CRFA General Secretary Antonio Manda made the announcement this week, emphasizing that the directive is part of the association’s broader vision to align with Football Association of Malawi (FAM) and Confederation of African Football (CAF) standards for club management and player development.

“This new requirement is not just a formality—it is a statement of intent,” said Manda. “We want our league to be a fertile ground for top-level talent, and that begins with competent, qualified coaching. The CAF B License is the benchmark we believe can elevate our teams to the next level.”

The move comes after the successful implementation of a 2025 directive that required all teams to engage coaches with at least a CAF C License or an equivalent diploma. According to CRFA, compliance

with that directive was largely positive, with several teams already going beyond the minimum and hiring CAF B and CAF A licensed coaches.

Manda noted that the transition to the CAF B requirement will give clubs sufficient time to prepare. “We are giving all teams over a year to plan, upskill, and invest in their technical departments. We are also working with FAM and CAF to organize more coaching courses within the region to help local coaches upgrade their credentials.”

The CRFA believes this move will not only improve match quality but also position the region as a serious contributor to Malawi’s footballing future by producing better-prepared players and tacticians.

“Our ultimate goal is to create a professional environment where talent is properly nurtured from the grassroots to the national stage,” Manda concluded.

The 2025 Chipiku Premier Division League is set to kick off on 31st May, with teams now also turning their attention to meeting the long-term coaching standard introduced by the CRFA.



BARBRA BANDA BACKS COACH NORA HAUPTLE, EYES WAFCON GLORY WITH ZAMBIA

By Joseph Tembo



As the countdown begins for the 2024 Women’s Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON), Zambia and Orlando Pride striker Barbra Banda has paid tribute to former coach Bruce Mwape, while voicing strong support for current head coach Nora Hauptle, who is steering the Copper Queens into a new era.

In a candid interview, Banda acknowledged the foundation laid by Mwape, who guided Zambia to several historic milestones. “We have great respect for our former coach, Bruce Mwape. He took us far, into many major tournaments. He’s part of our history,” said Banda.

Now under the leadership of Swiss tactician Nora Hauptle, Banda says the transition has been smooth and inspiring.

“Coach Nora is settling in very well, she’s adapting to our culture. We’ve already played two friendly matches, including one against Malawi. We’re

building a strong team,” she added. “She shares our passion for the country. She’s doing a great job, and we’re responding well to her expectations. There’s good chemistry.”

Eyes on the Prize

Zambia has been drawn in Group B alongside Morocco, DR Congo, and Senegal, a group Banda considers highly competitive but welcome.

“It’s a strong group, with many challenges. But that’s what we want, challenges. We don’t underestimate anyone. African women’s football has come a long way,” Banda stated. Fresh off a third-place finish at the last edition of WAFCON, the Copper Queens are not just aiming for progress, they’re gunning for gold.

“We’re focusing on ourselves, on our game. We’re aiming for the title. Last time, we finished third. This time, we want to go all the way. We want to make history.”

A Dream Bigger Than Football

For Banda, winning WAFCON would transcend sport, it would be a national achievement with emotional and symbolic weight.

“It would be indescribable. Every country dreams of winning this Cup. It’s the biggest in Africa,” she said passionately. “It would mean everything for us, for our motherland, Zambia. We want to do it for our flag, for our people, our supporters, for all those who believe in us. It would be a massive moment.”

Copper Queens on a Mission

With a talented squad, renewed energy under Coach Hauptle, and the leadership of stars like Banda, Zambia’s Copper Queens are not just participants, they are contenders. As the team builds momentum ahead of the tournament, one thing is clear: Zambia is dreaming big, and they believe now is their time.

FAZ VICE PRESIDENT DESCRIBES LOCKDOWN AT FOOTBALL HOUSE AS “VERY UNFORTUNATE”

By Joseph Tembo



The Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) has expressed concern over an incident that occurred earlier today at Football House, where unknown individuals locked the main offices in protest, demanding the removal of FAZ General Secretary Reuben Kamanga and his deputy John Msimuko.

FAZ Vice President Mutale Ng’andu described the situation as “very unfortunate” and emphasized that the association would not speculate or apportion blame until law enforcement agencies conclude their investigations.

“We invited the lawyers for the agency. They have been here. They’re carrying out an investigation,” said Ng’andu. “As the president guided, we’re also going to deal with this administratively. So we’re waiting to hear from law enforcement.”

Ng’andu reiterated that FAZ would release a comprehensive statement once the Zambia Police Service provides a full report on the matter. He stressed that such actions are not an appropriate way to express dissatisfaction.

“This is not the way you express your grievances,” he said. “Let’s not point fingers at anyone. We’ll wait for law enforcement agencies to carry out their job.”

In a separate statement, FAZ President Keith Mweemba described the situation at Football House as “purely an administrative issue” which will be dealt with internally by the association.

“For the rest of the investigations, the police will deal with it as we have reported accordingly,” said Mweemba.

According to eyewitnesses, the FAZ offices were locked by unknown individuals who left writings on the door stating they did not want FAZ General Secretary Reuben Kamanga. However, the offices have since been reopened and operations are returning to normal.

FAZ has urged stakeholders and the public to remain calm and allow the authorities to conclude their investigations.

MANE WITHDRAWS FROM SENEGAL SQUAD FOR FRIENDLIES AGAINST IRELAND AND ENGLAND

By Lucky Chama



The Zambia Women’s Volleyball National Team has concluded its final training session at the OYDC Zambia Sports Development Centre

head of their highly anticipated participation in the second annual Ditsala International Cup in Gaborone, Botswana.

The tournament, which runs from May 29 to June 1, 2025, is organized by Bring It Promotions (BIP) in partnership with the Botswana Volleyball Federation, and features top women’s volleyball teams from across the region.

Head coach Arnold Simwezi expressed confidence in the squad’s readiness after a focused and productive training camp at OYDC.

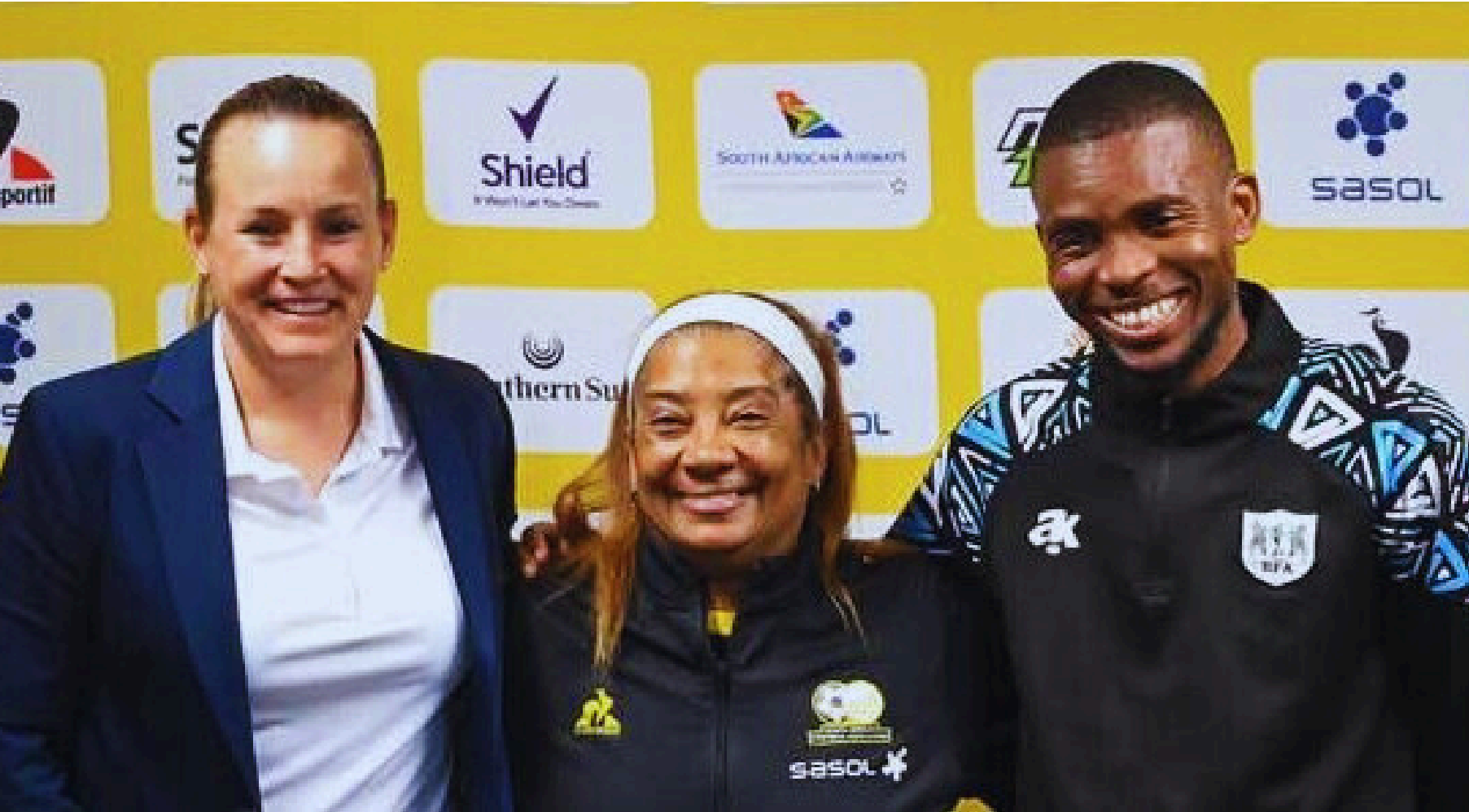
“The target for this particular engagement is to reach the final,” Simwezi told OYDC Media. “That would be a big plus for us, especially since we’ve been inactive for a while. Reaching the final will help us re-establish our presence in the region.”

Despite players coming from various clubs, Simwezi noted the team has quickly developed strong chemistry, a promising sign ahead of the international challenge.



COPPER QUEENS IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR THREE-NATIONS SERIES AHEAD OF WAFCON 2025

By Joseph Tembo



The Zambia Women’s National Football Team, Copper Queens, have arrived in South Africa ahead of the eagerly anticipated Three-Nations Series as part of their preparations for the 2025 TotalEnergies Women’s Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) set for July in Morocco.

The team, led by head coach Nora Häuptle, departed Kenneth Kaunda International Airport at 13:35 today aboard South African Airways and landed in Johannesburg at 15:20. The Copper Queens are set to face Botswana and hosts and regional rivals South Africa in a series of high-profile international friendlies scheduled to take place at the Lucas Moripe Stadium in Atteridgeville.

Zambia will open their campaign

against Botswana’s Mares on 31 May, followed by a clash with 2022

WAFCON champions Banyana Banyana on 3 June. The tournament kicks off on 28 May with the hosts South Africa taking on Botswana in the opener at 15:00.

Coach Häuptle joined her South African and Botswana counterparts, Desiree Ellis and Alex Malete, for a pre-tournament press conference this afternoon , where the coaches emphasized the importance of the series in fine-tuning their squads ahead of the continental showpiece.

“This tournament gives us a great opportunity to assess our players and team dynamics against strong regional competition. It’s all part of building toward WAFCON 2025,”

Häuptle said.

The Copper Queens, who reached the semi-finals of the last edition of WAFCON, are aiming to go even

further in Morocco and secure a spot at the 2026 FIFA Women’s World Cup. The friendly matches in South Africa will serve as a critical test of the team’s readiness for the upcoming continental competition, scheduled for 5–26 July 2025.

Fixtures:

- 28 May – South Africa vs Botswana (15h00)
 - 31 May – Zambia vs Botswana
 - 3 June – Zambia vs South Africa
- All matches will be played at the Lucas Moripe Stadium.

MANE WITHDRAWS FROM SENEGAL SQUAD FOR FRIENDLIES AGAINST IRELAND AND ENGLAND

By Lucky Chama



Senegalese forward Sadio Mane will miss the national team’s upcoming friendly matches against the Republic of Ireland and England after requesting to be excused from international duty.

Coach Pape Thiaw announced the 26-man squad on Tuesday, with Mane the most notable omission.

Senegal will face Ireland at Dublin’s Aviva Stadium on Friday, June 6,

before taking on England in Nottingham on June 10.

“It’s a personal decision, and it remains his private matter. As a coach, I respect that,” Thiaw said during a press conference.

Mane, 33, who has earned 111 caps for Senegal, faced criticism following the team’s mixed performances in March’s World Cup qualifiers, where they drew with Sudan and

defeated Togo.

Thiaw’s latest squad includes a new face—midfielder Mamadou Lamine Camara, fresh off winning the CAF Confederation Cup with Moroccan club RS Berkane.

Seven players return after missing the March fixtures, including Chelsea striker Nicolas Jackson and Everton midfielder Iliman Ndiaye.

KONKOLA BLADES PRESIDENT HAILS HISTORIC SEASON, THANKS FANS AND PARTNERS FOR CHAMPIONSHIP SUCCESS

By Lucky Chama



Konkola Blades Football Club (KBFC) President Davy Mulemwamba Mubita has issued a passionate appreciation message, celebrating the club’s championship triumph and expressing gratitude to all who played a part in the team’s successful campaign.

In a statement released, Mubita praised the dedication, loyalty, and resilience of the club’s supporters, players, technical bench, and partners, highlighting the unity and hard work that propelled the Blades to a victorious season and promotion to the Super Division.

“This season had its own highs and challenges, but you stood firm with us,” Mubita said. “Together we faced it all as one club, one family, and we finally celebrated together as we carried the championship title of the season.”

Saluting Sponsors and Supporters
The KBFC president gave special thanks to main sponsor Konkola Copper Mines PLC (KCM) for their consistent backing, calling their support the “backbone” of the club’s success.

“Your unwavering support and belief in our vision has enabled us to push boundaries, develop talent, and proudly represent Chililabombwe at the highest level,” Mubita noted.

Mubita also welcomed new sponsor Rockcrete Mining Limited, who recently partnered with the club to introduce Man of the Match awards, a move he described as motivational and timely as the team gears up for top-tier competition.

“Your support is what we need to forge ahead. Our boys are motivated by such generosity,” he added.

Fans: The Heart and Soul of the Club

To the loyal KBFC fans, Mubita offered heartfelt appreciation, calling them the “heart and soul” of the team.

“Whether cheering from the stands or supporting from afar, your presence has lifted our team and reminded us why we do what we do. From chants in the terraces to messages on social media, you’ve shown the true spirit of our club.”

Looking Ahead to the Super Division

With promotion secured, KBFC now sets its sights on the Zambian Super Division, aiming to build on this season’s momentum.

“The season has been one of growth, hard work, and unity. As we reflect on our achievements, we also look ahead with determination and hope. Together, we are a force to be reckoned with,” Mubita said.

He also extended gratitude to the club’s executive committee for their leadership and to the players and coaching staff for delivering on the pitch.

“Special salute and appreciation to our players and technical bench for holding fort at the front line and returning results for which we shall forever be grateful.”

A New Chapter Begins

As the Blades prepare to return to the Super Division, the message from the club’s leadership is clear: the journey is far from over. With renewed partnerships, a committed fan base, and a winning spirit, Konkola Blades is ready to write a new chapter in Zambian football.

IREEN LUNGU: COPPER QUEENS FIRED UP FOR BOTSWANA, SEEKING REDEMPTION AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA

By Joseph Tembo



Copper Queens midfielder Ireen Lungu has expressed confidence and determination ahead of Zambia’s international friendlies against Botswana and South Africa, stating that the team is well-prepared and motivated to make a strong statement on the pitch.

The Copper Queens are scheduled to face Botswana on May 31st, followed by a highly anticipated clash against South Africa’s Banyana Banyana on June 3rd, as part of preparations for the upcoming Women’s Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) qualifiers.

Speaking in an interview with FAZ media, Lungu said she was honored to be selected among the 24 players called up for the friendlies and praised the energy and commitment shown by both the experienced and younger members of the squad.

“I thank God for being selected. It’s a big privilege to be in the team.

Looking at the training sessions we’ve had, everyone is pushing hard. Age doesn’t show, everyone is ready for the Botswana game,” she said.

Reflecting on Zambia’s narrow defeat to South Africa in their last meeting at the 2022 WAFCON semi-finals, where Banyana Banyana clinched a last-minute victory, Lungu admitted there is a strong emotional drive heading into the rematch.

“That game is in the past, but we’re still angry. Everyone wants to face them again—we’re not happy about what happened. But this time, we are ready,” Lungu declared with resolve.

The 2022 WAFCON saw Zambia finish in third place, their best-ever performance at the continental showpiece. Lungu believes the upcoming friendlies will be a key indicator of the team’s readiness to

improve on that result in the next edition.

“These friendlies will help us know if we’re ready for WAFCON. We just need to push the new players to match the level of experience we have. As professionals, we’re expected to lead by example and stay united as a team.”

With the full squad finally in camp, Lungu is optimistic that the Copper Queens are in a strong position to deliver a successful campaign.

“I’m very excited that everyone is here now. We have no excuses. We’ll give it our best,” she concluded.

The Copper Queens’ matches against Botswana and South Africa are expected to provide valuable insight into the team’s depth, cohesion, and competitiveness as they gear up for continental glory.

CHIAMAKA NNADOZIE READY TO LEAD NIGERIA’S REDEMPTION AT WAFCON 2024

By Fulltime Reporter



As the 2024 TotalEnergies CAF Women’s Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) draws near, Chiamaka Nnadozie is stepping onto the continental stage not just as one of Africa’s finest goalkeepers, but as a symbol of Nigeria’s ambition, resilience, and hunger for redemption.

At just 24 years old, the Super Falcons shot-stopper is no longer playing just to prove herself. She is playing for a nation, a legacy, and a new generation determined to reclaim its place at the top of African women’s football.

“I don’t just want to participate in this tournament,” she says with quiet intensity. “I want to leave my mark on it.”

“We Have to Earn It”

Nigeria has been drawn in Group B alongside Tunisia, Algeria, and Botswana, a line-up some might view as favourable. But Nnadozie isn’t letting her guard down.

“People might think it’s a manageable group, but the reality is very different,” she told CAFOnline.com. “Women’s football has made huge strides. Every team is improving. No one can be underestimated anymore. We have to treat this group with the seriousness it deserves. Qualification won’t be handed to us, we’ll need to earn it through hard work and discipline.”

Her words echo a growing understanding in the Nigerian camp: dominance is no longer guaranteed. It must be fought for.

Still Hurting, Still Driven

The Super Falcons are still nursing the wound of a semi-final defeat to hosts Morocco in the last edition of WAFCON. It was a moment that stunned the football world, and deeply impacted Nnadozie.

“It was incredibly tough to accept,” she said. “We wanted to defend our

crown, but sometimes football doesn’t go your way. Morocco had a well-executed strategy. It’s not that Nigeria is weaker, it’s that other nations now see us as the team to beat.”

This reality, she adds, demands humility and evolution.

“They prepare for us. That forces us to stay humble and to keep raising our level.”

Wearing the Weight of a Nation

With 11 WAFCON titles, Nigeria remains the most successful team in the competition’s history, a legacy both daunting and inspiring.

“Wearing the Super Falcons jersey means carrying a legacy,” Nnadozie admits. “We play for the generations before us who won everything. The spotlight is always on us. When Nigeria loses, it feels like a national crisis!”

But rather than feeling crushed by expectation, Nnadozie and her teammates are using it as fuel.

“We must keep calm. We’re athletes, we make mistakes too. The key is to turn that pressure into positive energy and motivation.”

All Eyes on the Prize

As WAFCON 2024 kicks off, Nigeria’s mission is clear: redemption, revival, and a return to the summit of African women’s football. And leading that charge from the back will be Chiamaka Nnadozie, gloves laced, eyes focused, and ambitions higher than ever.

“Our goal is clear,” she says. “To go all the way, but with focus and intelligence.”

The Super Falcons are ready. And with Nnadozie between the posts, they believe the crown is within reach.

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