



SMITH OPENS UP ON QPR MOVE & SURPRISE AFCON CALL-UP



SEBELEBE: PIRATES HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN THE LEAGUE



BUCS EYEING JAN MOVE FOR RED-HOT WINGER?



DOLLY: I WANT TO PUT CAPE TOWN FOOTBALL BACK ON THE MAP



AFCON COULD FURTHER SPARK MORE INTEREST IN WANTED MOKWANA



MAAHIER: I'M READY TO TAKE A HEAD COACH ROLE

THE DRAWING BOARD WITH MORITZ KOSSMANN & ACE OF THE WEEK

QUICK HOW TO GUIDE

(BUTTON EXAMPLES)

THIS SHOWS YOU WHICH PAGE YOU ARE CURRENTLY READING

CLICK THIS BUTTON TO GO BACK TO THE HOME PAGE

ITEM NAME

CLICK TO GO TO HOME

TAKES YOU TO THE PREVIOUS PAGE

TAKES YOU TO THE NEXT PAGE

< CLICK TO GO BACK

CLICK TO GO NEXT >

THESE BUTTONS ARE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE.

CLICKING EACH OF THESE BUTTONS TAKES YOU OUT OF THIS E-PAPER, DIRECTLY TO THE WEBSITE OR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM







— THE —

GREAT *Christmas* SALE

LAST CHANCE TO SHOP UNBEATABLE DEALS!

R4799
SAVE R1000

RESTONIC
137cm Rest Zone Base Set
• 1-Year Guarantee
Included in a 10-Year
Service Warranty



R4999
SAVE R1300

RESTONIC
152cm Rest Zone Base Set
• 1-Year Guarantee
Included in a 10-Year
Service Warranty



R5499
SAVE R1800

RESTONIC
152cm Vegas Base Set
• 1-Year Guarantee
Included in a 10-Year
Service Warranty

R6999
SAVE R1000

RESTONIC
152cm Tanzanite
Pillow-Top Base Set
• 2-Year Guarantee
Included in a 10-Year
Service Warranty



R8999
SAVE R1000

RESTONIC
183cm Tanzanite
Pillow-Top Base Set
• 2-Year Guarantee
Included in a 10-Year
Service Warranty



OFFERS VALID FROM 8 - 26 DECEMBER 2025, WHILE STOCKS LAST. Ts & Cs APPLY.

OK FURNITURE

SHOP NOW

CLICK THE STORY YOU WANT TO READ. REMEMBER, YOU CAN COME BACK TO THIS PAGE BY CLICKING THE BUTTON THAT SAYS “CLICK TO GO BACK HOME” AT THE TOP RIGHT OF EACH PAGE

IT'S THE GREAT CHRISTMAS SALE AT **OK** FURNITURE. DON'T MISS YOUR LAST CHANCE AT UNBEATABLE DEALS.

HOME PAGE



RUMOURS
LATEST FROM THE RUMOUR MILL



IDISKI TV
LATEST FROM IDISKI TV



TYLON SMITH
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



KEAGAN DOLLY
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



KAMOGELO SEBELEBELE
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



AFCON AND MOKWANA
NEWS



MAAHIER DAVIDS
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



NEW ENERGY RISING
FEATURE



TEAM OF THE WEEK
& ACE OF THE WEEK



TACTICS CORNER
THE DRAWING BOARD

CLICK A BUTTON BELOW TO GO TO OUR WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA



SEKHUKHUNE UTD INTERESTED IN MOJELA?

Sekhukhune United are believed to have shown interest in Stellenbosch FC striker Bradley Lehlohonolo Mojela. The former TS Galaxy player has been transfer-listed by Stellenbosch FC, as has former Mamelodi Sundowns midfielder Lesiba Nku. Babina Noko are believed to be looking to boost their attacking options, but with Mojela’s contract still having some time to run, they will have to pay if they really want to bring in the player. Stellies have already prepared for life without the 29-year-old, and he didn’t feature in their last four matches of 2025.



PIRATES TO CAST EYES ON EMERGING STAR?

Golden Arrows winger Siyanda Ndlovu has reportedly attracted interest from Orlando Pirates ahead of the upcoming January window. The 23-year-old is among the leading talents in the league this season and won the October Player of the Month award. In his 60 games for Arrows, he’s scored seven goals with 10 assists in all competitions, making him one of the most proficient wingers in the league right now. Sources say that Pirates could make a move in January, though they may also wait until the end of the current season.



RICHARDS BAY REGISTER INTEREST IN ARROWS’ UNSETTLED ZWANE

Richards Bay are keeping a close eye on the situation of Golden Arrows midfielder Nhlanhla Zwane, who’s linked with an exit at the end of the season. Having already missed a couple of matches, the 25-year-old currently finds himself behind players like Isaac Cisse and Nqobeko Dlamini in the team selection. Zwane has failed to make the match-day squad in five of the last six matches Abafana Bes’thende have played across all competitions.



DISCLAIMER. THE RUMOURS IN THE MILL HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO IDISKI TIMES BY SOURCES WITHIN THE FOOTBALL COMMUNITY AND LIKE WITH ANY HEARSAY MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



DEBONAIRS PIZZA



AMAZING IS...
extra time, extra drama,
and extra flava from the
WINNING TEAM!

ORDER NOW



THE NEW COROLLA CROSS

FILLED WITH **LIFE**





AFCON PERFECT PLATFORM FOR MOKWANA AS INTEREST PERSISTS

Elias Mokwana has a huge month ahead of him as he joins the Bafana Bafana camp for the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco.

A surprise late inclusion for Hugo Broos, given he was not part of the previous two squads, Mokwana's form at Al Hazem in the Saudi Pro League earned him a place back in the selection.

This was after making a season-long loan move from Esperance Sportive de Tunis, after being courted by several Russian Premier League and Turkish Super Lig clubs.

Sources have confirmed his loan club have shown interest in potentially making the deal permanent, while there have been enquiries from Turkey again, Romania and the Botola Pro side Mas Fez.

In Qatar, Al Wakrah have made enquiries too, with the former Sekhukhune United winger's long-term club future still in the balance.

Mokwana has come a long way from his days in the third-tier with Platinum City Rovers four years ago, having risen to

the PSL with Babina Noko, via Rovers, after winning promotion to the Motsepe Foundation Championship.

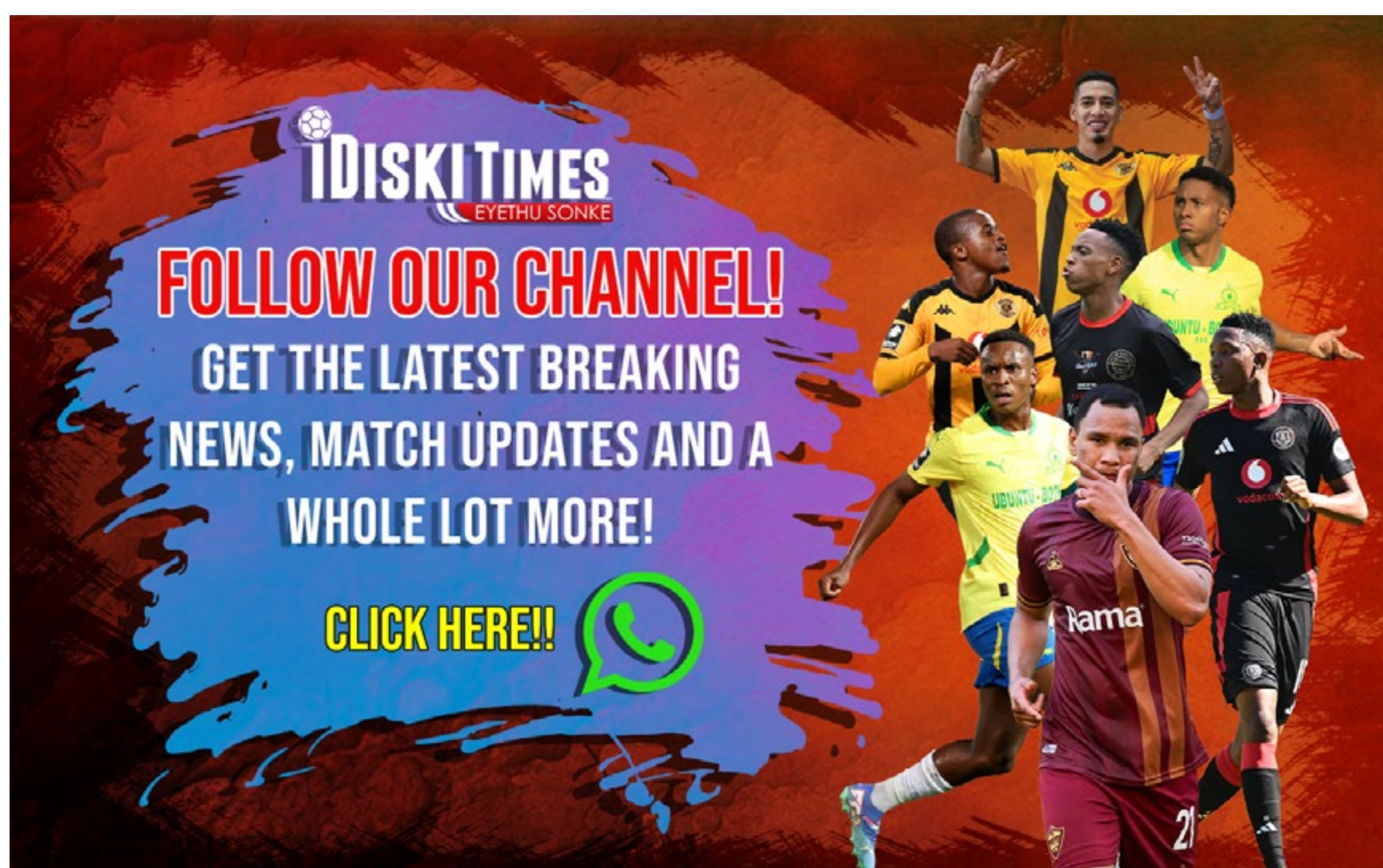
After two seasons in the top-flight, he broke into Bafana, with 65 games, six goals and six assists for the ambitious club before his move to Tunisia.

At Taraji he netted seven goals with four assists in 38 games in a solitary season, where he featured in the CAF Champions League and FIFA Club World Cup, which has significantly raised his profile.

Now on loan at Al Hazem and with two goals and two assists in nine senior international caps, it's a critical stage of his career, with the AFCON another major platform to impress.

Broos suggested that his versatility was a major factor, having featured on either wing and now as a central option during his time in Saudi Arabia over the past six months.

The squad arrived in camp on Monday at the High Performance Centre at the University of Pretoria (TUKS).





‘TREBLE LOADING FOR BUCCANEERS’

Orlando Pirates are the 2025/26 Carling Knockout champions after they beat Marumo Gallants in Saturday's final, with Relebohile Mofokeng grabbing an extra-time winner. It was their second cup success of the season, following the MTN8.

Don't forget to catch match reaction moments after the final whistle, and more from Junior Khanye, Tso Vilakazi, Machaka, Lindo Pep, Nkululeko Nkewu and others on iDiskiTV.

Make sure you subscribe for free on YouTube, and click the bell icon to get notified as soon as new videos are released.

'Happy Days Ahead For The Happy People'

“Congratulations to Orlando Pirates for winning the Carling Knockout. In a short period, Abdeslam Ouaddou has already picked up two trophies for Orlando Pirates. He won the MTN8 and now the Carling Knockout.

“He has completed the double and can now start thinking about the Treble.

“Orlando Pirates are leading the Betway Premiership ahead of Mamelodi Sundowns, and if they can secure that, they will be Treble winners.

“There is also the Nedbank Cup next year, which can make it a possible quadruple.

“Happy days ahead for the Happy People.

“The final was not a great spectacle. I had a deep suspicion that Marumo Gallants would want to drag it to penalties to give themselves a fighting chance. They did exactly that.

“There were no good performances from either team.

“Well done to Pirates for getting the win. Well done to Relebohile Mofokeng for scoring the winner.”





EVERY DREAM **HAS A GOAL.**
MZANSI HAS A NEW COACH

OLD MUTUAL, THE FINANCIAL COACH
BEHIND YOUR DREAMS

FSP & Ins. Ts & Cs.

TYLON SMITH - FROM DDC TO AFCON IN LESS THAN A YEAR

TYLON SMITH has gone from being a name you hardly blinked an eyelid at in the U20 South Africa national team squad selection to arguably one of the finest prospects in African football in the space of just over a year. Even to himself, not being touted as the future star of Stellenbosch as many of his peers have been, or even making his professional debut before landing a dream move to Europe with Queens Park Rangers,



this meteoric rise is scarcely believable. But it’s a tale of taking your chances when it matters, from winning the DStv Diski Challenge, the Premier League NXT Gen Cup, the U20 Cosafa Cup, the U20 Africa Cup of Nations, where he was the Player of the Tournament before their U20 FIFA World Cup, Smith has shone when it mattered and become a serial winner. iDiski Times Senior Journalist LORENZ KÖHLER caught up with the London-based talent after his surprise inclusion in the Bafana Bafana squad for the upcoming 2025 Africa Cup of Nations to find out more about his incredible rise to prominence, life in the United Kingdom, being named as one of the best talents in Africa and what’s to come over the next months of his burgeoning career.

Lorenz Köhler: Hi Tylon, how was training?

Tylon Smith: Ah, it was a good, chilled, easy session.

LK: Look, obviously, it’s been a crazy few hours for you. Let’s just start off by getting a raw reaction to being named in the AFCON squad. I know you thought there was a possibility, but to hear it is a different story.

TS: Yes... so my reaction, I felt a bit emotional, it’s something big for me, it’s a big achievement. My first senior international call-up, and I was just excited and also thanked God for the opportunity he gave me. I give him all the love and praise. I’m very grateful. I spoke to my mom first, it was a first conversation because it was just before training, but the few words were: she said I must give thanks to God and stay humble, it’s the few words she gave me.

LK: It’s been a crazy journey from the DStv Diski Challenge with Stellenbosch, to Queens Park Rangers and now Bafana Bafana via Amajita. What do you attribute this crazy rise to? How do you explain going from DDC to this in such a short space of time?

TS: You know, for me, my thing was to always play in Europe one day and...





EVERY DREAM **HAS A GOAL.**
MZANSI HAS A NEW COACH



coming out of the DDC, I was just working hard in training, although I didn't play in the first team, when I trained with the DDC, I always kept working hard and staying consistent. And I knew my dream was to play for Bafana Bafana one day, and I didn't expect it to happen this quick. And all this started happening... Being named in the final squad, the move to QPR was massive at the age of 20, without any minutes in the Stellenbosch first team. And QPR came and took me, which I'm also grateful for that.

LK: What was the moment or the match where you realised I'm going to become a professional footballer, even when you play U17 or U20 for the national team, it's not a guarantee you will turn pro. So what was the moment where it dawned on you that you have a big chance?

TS: That moment? Haha... that moment was definitely when I won Player of the Tournament at AFCON. I felt that moment, that I'm close. I knew I impressed many scouts and teams who were present at the tournament. So I knew something was coming, and after that... such awards, in general, go to strikers or forwards. Never a centre-back or defensive players. So after receiving the award, I knew, 'Nah, I'm close now' [to turning professional]. It made me believe I can compete in top leagues and things.

“MY AMBITIONS FOR THE AFCON ARE JUST TO GO THERE AND TO DO WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM ME TO DO, JUST TO LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCED PLAYERS IN MY POSITION, AND JUST TO DEVELOP AS A PLAYER, AS A 20-YEAR-OLD.”

LK: That COSAFA Cup tournament, it was a special group, yourself, Mbekezeli Mbokazi, Jody Ah Shene, Shandre Campbell, Shakeel April, the list goes on.... There were many top players in the squad. How important was that, specifically to have won it to qualify for AFCON? How do you reflect on it for your journey?

TS: Everything started at that tournament, playing with such a talented group of players, was something big for me. That's why I want to thank all the players I play with, for making it possible for me to reach the highest level and all this that's happening to me, it's due to them also. They also played a huge role in my football career. I feel that the COSAFA tournament was massive, we didn't concede a single goal. And I think if it wasn't for COSAFA, I wouldn't have been here where I am today. Not to be negative, if we didn't make it there, to qualify for AFCON, I would not be here



**OLD MUTUAL,
THE FINANCIAL COACH
BEHIND YOUR DREAMS**



in England; it would have taken longer for me to get to Europe. So that played a major role in my life, in my career – winning the [U20] COSAFA Cup.

LK: You could be reunited with the ‘TLB’, now at senior level; he was your partner in that tournament. How special of a player is he, and how excited are you to see him again?

TS: Hahaha, yeah, Beki... such a talented footballer. He’s got so much experience now, he’s grown as a player, and to play with him it’s good. I said this before, he makes your job easier. I love his personality as well; he’s a hard worker on and off the field. He’s just an amazing human being. So I guess to play with him again will be nice. We have a good understanding, so yeah...

LK: How have things been at QPR in general? I know you had a gap in training; you had to go to Chile for the U20 FIFA World Cup, but how are things going?

TS: I’m positive about my development here; some great coaches are helping me here now and improving me as a player where it’s needed. I’m really grateful for that, and I’m doing really good here, working really hard every single day on training. Positive words from the coach and now I just have to keep on working, get my head down and fight for my place. So everything has been going good at QPR, yes.

LK: Working in the first team squad. Many people had that question when you left: is Tylon going to play with the Championship or be like Shandre Campbell in the development team? How have things been training with the first team? QPR are doing well in the Championship, so it’s a good level of players. So, how is it, given you were someone who didn’t make your debut in the PSL?

TS: I think that’s just something as a player you have to adapt to, physicality, the style of play, the level. I also think it’s just a mind thing; if you’re mentally strong, you can handle anything. It’s been good training with the first team; the level is high, yes, physical. But I feel like I’ve adapted



“THE MOVE TO QPR WAS MASSIVE AT THE AGE OF 20, WITHOUT ANY MINUTES IN THE STELLENBOSCH FIRST TEAM. AND QPR CAME AND TOOK ME, WHICH I’M ALSO GRATEFUL FOR THAT.”

really quick. Training sessions are good, I just need to keep working hard, my time will come, and everything is good here.

LK: Life in London, it’s not exactly Idas Valley. How have you found things?

TS: I’ve been here almost four months now, I would say the first two months, I was just indoors. I’m still settling in; it’s a bit difficult, but I’m getting used to it, getting used to the weather as well. But it’s hard, I can’t just go out to this place or that place, because I don’t know London. It’s not Idas Valley or there in Stellenbosch, where I go outside and do things, where I know the place. But I’m not homesick, because my focus is on football, that’s what I use as my weapon to keep me going, to keep me calm, so yeah, I’ll be fine.

LK: CAF Awards in Rabat... you mentioned earlier it’s things that traditionally go to forwards, but how much confidence does it give you, and



EVERY DREAM **HAS A GOAL.**
MZANSI HAS A NEW COACH

OLD MUTUAL,
THE FINANCIAL COACH
BEHIND YOUR DREAMS

FSP & Ins. Ts & Cs.



how was that experience, being the only defender at the CAF Awards? Othmane Maamma won it; he won the Golden Ball at the U20 World Cup, and Abdellah Ouazane is one of the most talked-about talents in world football. How much confidence did it give you to be named amongst these players and walk around Africa’s elite in Rabat?

TS: It gives me a lot of confidence. I know I didn’t win the award, but for me just to be there, lots of experienced players, some of the best players in Africa around me, it was something big. Just to even be in one of those chairs, it was something big for me, as a defender. As a 20-year-old, so it’s something big for me; it built my confidence.

LK: Your ambitions for the future now. There’s AFCON, where you are in the 25-man squad, there’s the 2026 FIFA World Cup in six months’ time.

TS: My ambitions for the AFCON are just to go there and to do what is expected from me to do, just to learn from the experienced players in my position, and just to develop as a player, as a 20-year-old. So the main part for me is just to go there, to work, and just to execute, and we will see what happens after. And going to the World Cup, that will also be something good for me, if I can make it for the World Cup. I don’t need to worry about that now; my main focus is on the AFCON – doing well, and then we’ll see what happens after that.

LK: Has the coach or anyone at SAFA spoken to you about this or did you find out together with us as media?

TS: No, I just found out... I watched SABC on my phone, haha. And then I watched the whole thing, when the coach announced the team, that’s when I found out.

LK: Lastly, your former team, Stellenbosch... they have not been doing very well this season, it’s been an up and down season – just a message to them after everything that’s happened and also there’s been some rumours in South Africa this side, that they are interested in bringing you back on loan?



ON MBOKAZI: “BEKI... SUCH A TALENTED FOOTBALLER. HE’S GOT SO MUCH EXPERIENCE NOW, HE’S GROWN AS A PLAYER, AND TO PLAY WITH HIM IT’S GOOD. I SAID THIS BEFORE, HE MAKES YOUR JOB EASIER.”

TS: Let me start off by taking the moment to express my deepest gratitude to the players at Stellies, the coaches, and the staff. I want to thank coach Steve Barker for giving me that opportunity to be part of the first team. I learnt a lot from him, and secondly, a huge thank you to my U21 coach, coach Van [Evangelos Vellios], coach JP [Faruggia], and coach Jason Rhode. They have been a big, big, big part of my life, on and off the field, and they created a player, the player I am today. I want to thank them, I want to say I love them a lot, you know. On the story about the loan? I don’t know anything, and I don’t want to talk about that for now.

LK: Thank you so much, Tylon. Hopefully, by the end of this season, you will be a Premier League player and on your way to the World Cup with Bafana!

TS: Thank you so much. I appreciate it!



OLDMUTUAL

DO GREAT THINGS EVERY DAY

FSP & Ins. Ts & Cs.



‘I WANT TO PUT CAPE TOWN FOOTBALL BACK ON THE MAP’

A great deal has changed for KEAGAN DOLLY since he first packed his bags for Cape Town as a promising teenager chasing a football dream. 14 seasons have passed since he lit up the pitch at Ajax Cape Town, and that wide-eyed youngster who broke into the PSL is now a seasoned 32-year-old with a career rich in medals, miles and lessons. Dolly's journey has taken him through the pinnacle of South African football with Mamelodi Sundowns, where the Bafana Bafana international and Olympic team captain collected almost every major honour on offer, before testing himself in Europe with Montpellier in France's Ligue 1. His return home saw him don the colours of Kaizer Chiefs, and after a short stint with TS Galaxy, he now finds himself back in the Mother City, older, wiser, and ready for a new chapter. At Cape Town City, now in the Motsepe Foundation Championship, Dolly has reunited with John Comitis, the man who helped launch his professional career. This time, though, he steps into a very different role: that of a senior leader in a youthful squad bursting with potential. As he tells ROB DELPORT, Dolly is fully embracing the responsibility, guiding the next generation, helping shape the club's identity, and playing his part in City's determined push for a return to the Betway Premiership.

Rob Delport: Keagz, we had a little chat when you landed in Cape Town, but now you've got some games under your belt here. How has this second homecoming here felt?

Keagan Dolly: I think it's been great. I'm very familiar with Cape Town. I spent my early years here, so coming back was an easy decision. Like you said, my in-laws are from Cape Town, so it feels like my second home. And I always knew Cape Town City is a professional club that wants to achieve things. I've worked with the boss, John, before — he gave me my first professional contract — so everything felt very natural joining here.

RD: Coming to Cape Town as a teenager and coming back in your early thirties, a very different experience?

KD: Ja, coming here when you're 32 is a bit different, because now you play the senior role. When you're younger, you're energetic and just play, but now you understand things differently. I sat down with my family and felt this was the right place for my kids to grow up as well. Cape Town's beautiful, safe and great for families. And coming here, I knew the role I needed to play. There are a lot of youngsters with talent, and for me it's just to guide them with the experience I've gained. I'm here to help where I can, but also still compete and show them you have to compete every day.

RD: You mention the young talent in the squad, but Cape football hasn't had the best of times recently. Could you ever have imagined these clubs in this situation?

KD: No, never, especially because of how well the clubs are managed. I've been at Ajax, and from the academy to the



first team, you get everything you need as a professional. Same here at Cape Town City. So it's strange that Cape Town teams struggle to last in the top flight. I was sad to see Cape Town Spurs go down, especially with the infrastructure and talent they had. And with Cape Town City, you see again the talent they have. But for us and the next generations, it's about changing that perception people have — maybe they think we're soft and can't compete up in Jo'burg. We need to change that mentality and put Cape Town football back where it belongs.

RD: I said when they signed you that this is a perfect scenario. You've dealt with pressure, but you also flourished early in Cape Town. At Sundowns and Chiefs, youngsters don't get the same freedom to express themselves.

KD: And I think Cape Town gives youngsters that freedom and opportunity early in their careers. Maybe sometimes there should be more balance between promoting youngsters and having experienced players who know how to deal with pressure. But one thing Cape Town does give is the chance to showcase talent. In Jo'burg, it's about results, so it's not easy for a youngster to just walk into the first team. You have to earn it, because the big three have big-name players. Growing up at Sundowns, I left because I saw I wouldn't get the opportunity. I had to come to Cape Town to prove myself. So ja, youngsters here get chances — we just need to find the balance of when those opportunities should come.

RD: I look at the Sundowns generation now, obviously, everybody's path is different, but so many guys who I'd love to see exposed more to senior football. I look at Thato Sibiyi, Siyabonga Mabena, Bennet Mokoena, Gomolemo Kekana, or even more time for a Kutlwano Lethlaku, and a few others. Do you ever think about how things would have been different had



you stayed?

KD: I don't know, because I was in the era where they were buying top players trying to win the league. Training with the first team, you had the likes of [Collins] Mbesuma, Tso Vilakazi, Booth, Teko Modise — proper players you looked up to, and you were afraid to go to the first team. The Sundowns now is more about the team than individuals, so it's easier for youngsters. But if I stayed, I don't think I'd be where I am. I probably would've gone on loan for a few years. Players like Themba Zwane are a testament to that — he waited patiently, and now he's one of our best players.

RD: A bunch of those 2016 guys spent time away at some point.

KD: Ja, I was away, Percy [Tau] was away. Samuel Julies was there, who started young. Themba Zwane, as well, he spent his time away. So a lot of us had to go away to show that we are good enough to be a part of that team. But also, we had a different coach who could turn the team into winners, and he made us into a unit, which is coach Pitso. You know, he's a serial winner. He wants to win. And that rubbed off on all of us. It wasn't about the age or your name; it was about who was doing the job. And you could see that 2016 team, we were just ruthless. We won all our games.

RD: Thinking about your own journey, I don't know if I've seen you have many "bad" games. Maybe average games, but not bad. But football is a team sport. Your first season at Chiefs was probably your best personal season.

KD: Yeah.

RD: But like you said, the pressures at those clubs are about results. If you're having 8/10 games and the team still loses, people forget those performances. Was there any point where you felt like, 'Hey, this isn't working', apart from injuries?

KD: Not really, because I don't regret anything I did in my career. From leaving the School of Excellence to joining Sundowns, then coming to Cape Town. I think it's a path that I had to follow for me to be the player and the person I am

"IN JOBURG, IT'S ABOUT RESULTS, SO IT'S NOT EASY FOR A YOUNGSTER TO JUST WALK INTO THE FIRST TEAM. YOU HAVE TO EARN IT, BECAUSE THE BIG THREE HAVE BIG-NAME PLAYERS."

today. It also created the pathway for me to be with my wife today and have kids. So I don't regret any place. But there were a lot of times when the team is struggling, and you still get blamed for the team's results, and no one's actually looking at you individually and looking at your contribution, but because, like you said, the team is not doing well, no one's worried about you. They want you to win. So there were moments where you feel like, 'Do I leave?' In France, there were a few moments where, I'm not getting enough time to play. Injuries are happening, and then you think, 'Do I go back home? Do I look for a different club? Is it going to work out?' Or do I just try and stay and give my best, and hopefully I'm gonna get my opportunity. So they do come, those moments, and you always have to sit down and think properly, because at times the decision doesn't only affect you, especially when you get older in life, it affects the whole family. So, ja, when you're younger, you can make those rational decisions where you decide, Okay, I'm leaving. But once you get older, especially when I got to Chiefs, it was more about the family than just me. So, ja, that was my experience.

RD: How was it going from Sundowns, where you were young and winning trophies, to clubs going through barren spells — Montpellier not winning for years, Chiefs in their drought? Is it a different battle?

KD: Ja, it's a bit difficult, because you do go from winning everything, being on top, and then sort of just going into a slump and maybe just falling into the trap where it's okay, the team is not doing well.



It's okay. And you become this average person where you've been on top and you want to win everything, and you become, like, just accepting everything, your surroundings and what's happening, and you're like, 'Okay, it's fine. We're not winning anything. The Club hasn't been doing well, so it's okay you're not the only one, no one can just blame you'. It's been like this. So I take blame for that, because I shouldn't have just fell into the trap and just been like everyone and accept things. I had to stay the winner I was before, I had to still try my best and give my best. But you get comfortable and you just accept as well, because it is what it is. It's the situation. And the harder you try, the more criticised you get, and you get to a point sometimes where you feel like, what's the use? And again, I take the blame, because the winning spirit shouldn't have left me. I should have kept trying my best every time. But then again, you do try your best, and no one recognises it, and you give your all, and you get hurt, and then people still blame you. But I think that's the battle that I had to fight. And again, it's experiences that made me the person and the player I am today. It's things I can teach the upcoming youngsters like Emile Witbooi, who is an outstanding player. I'm quite close to him. So these are the things I can tell him to expect growing up and going overseas or wherever he's going. And, ja, so I'm just trying to share my experiences with these boys so that they know when they're in a similar situation, they know how to deal with it

RD: That's the thing about breaking through young — you're always under the spotlight. Thirteen years ago you won Young Player of the Season. Emile has that too, added with being Surprise Ralani's son. People forget we were raving about him as a kid...

KD: Fourteen, fifteen. Exactly.

RD: And you don't know what's going to happen. So have you been impressed by how mature he's had to be already?

KD: Ja! I was still being a kid, enjoying going to the mall and being a 16/17-year-old, being with my friends, planning sleepovers, and just being a teenager. But no, I'm super proud of the way Emile carries himself, the way he deals with all the pressure, and just the way he trains and plays. You can see he's very mature. You can see he's been playing at a high level for a few years now. And you can see that he comes from a good home. I'm sure his mom and dad really, really showed him the way. And you could see the career his dad had in Europe. And I'm just super happy for him for what he has been doing so far in his career. And I think if he stays like this, if he stays grounded and keeps working hard, he'll still go very far. Also, he's from the School of Excellence, so we relate to a lot. So, ja, I speak to him often and just tell him he should keep going. He shouldn't let all these talks and compliments get to his head, because he still has a long way to go. And not a lot of people get this opportunity of playing professionally from 16 until you're potentially 35/36, so he still has to prove himself each and every day. And that's the pressure.

RD: And with different pressures.



“ALSO, WE HAD A DIFFERENT COACH WHO COULD TURN THE TEAM INTO WINNERS, AND HE MADE US INTO A UNIT, WHICH IS COACH PITSO. YOU KNOW, HE'S A SERIAL WINNER. HE WANTS TO WIN. AND THAT RUBBED OFF ON ALL OF US.”

When you were that age, social media wasn't what it is now. Everyone has an opinion... Just to wrap up, I want to talk about the humanity of the game. You've won silverware, but football also gave you your life outside football. Your friendship with Travis [Graham], meeting your wife — it's easy to forget what the game gives you. In that regard, have you been a serial winner?

KD: Ja, I think people forget that outside the field we're dads, husbands, brothers. They expect us to be the person on TV all the time. But football helps us in many ways — opportunities, sponsors, people you meet. If it wasn't for football, I wouldn't have met my wife or seen the world. My first flight was because of football at 13, going to Zurich. You think back and realise you owe this game a lot. I think it gave me the chance to help my family, too, to take them out of struggle. Many players can say the same. So I'll always be grateful to all the clubs I've played for. And youngsters must take it seriously — there are opportunities to change their lives.

RD: And for the rest of your life.

KD: Exactly. You can start a lot for your family and your kids' kids. Just play the game right, stay focused, and look after yourself.

RD: Thanks so much, Keagz.

‘PIRATES HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN THE LEAGUE’

KAMOGELO SEBELEBELE took time to warm up to the Father Christmas role he was playing for the kids at the Samaritan Children’s Home in Polokwane. While his Orlando Pirates teammate Tapelo Xoki took to the role like a duck to water, the winger was initially shy and appeared somewhat uncomfortable standing in front of beady-eyed kids delighted at having the stars they only see on TV visiting their home.

But once he got into character, the lad from Tembisa was a true Santa Claus – resplendent in the famous red, conical cap with a white trim and a white pom-pom on the end – dishing out gifts to the kids and gleefully taking pictures with them. He swiftly took over a song when the a cappella group of teenage boys serenaded the children, and was in his element later on when dishing out popcorn and slushies to the children.

“It was very good playing Father Christmas,” he tells me later on, following an afternoon of the Buccaneers’ Community Service Initiative under the slogan ‘We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give’.

The slogan resonated with Sebelebele.

“What they are doing here is very good because children need support from their parents, and sometimes, unfortunately, not everyone gets to be with their parents. But I hope these kids will learn from these people who are taking care of them; they are their parents.”

Being at home, Sebelebele was reminded of his younger days: “It means a lot to

me to be here as a role model. I am reminded of how, as a youngster, I used to admire people on TV and just how exciting it was to see them in real life. It was inspiring for me, and I am hoping that us being here with these kids serves as a source of motivation.”

iDiski Senior soccer writer MATSHELANE MAMABOLO was at the home and spoke to Sebelebele about his first season at Pirates and his ambitions for the campaign.

Matshelane Mamabolo: Kamo, let’s talk football now. This has been a good year for Pirates, trophies and currently top of the league table.

Kamogelo Sebelele: It’s been a pretty good one so far. Obviously, the main aim for us is to win as many trophies as possible. And even the league, we want to win it. We want to win every trophy.

MM: Your first year at the big club. How have you found it so far?

KS: I am happy and proud of myself so far because I’ve been doing well. Unfortunately, I got injured, but I will come back strong. Besides the injury, I am happy with everything here at Pirates. The technical team and the management are very supportive. And what’s good is that even as players, we are supportive of each other in spite of us being in competition for starting places. We didn’t start the league well, but now we are all working hard. No matter who plays, we support each other because we are all working towards the same goal.



MM: You were in the Bafana Bafana squad, but now you are missing out on going to the Africa Cup of Nations. Tell me how that makes you feel?

KS: Obviously, I am very disappointed. It's every player's dream to play in such tournaments, and when you've been part of the squad and the dream looks within reach, it is even harder when it does not materialise. But injuries are part of football. When I come back, I will work hard to be part of the squad that will be going to the World Cup. For now, I am just happy for those who are going to AFCON and will support them.

MM: A significant number of those are your teammates at Pirates because you guys have nine players in the squad. It speaks to the great season the club is having now, right?

KS: We are very happy to have so many players representing the club at the continental showcase. I know they will do well for Bafana, and that will also lift the club's name even higher. They have our support, so good luck to all the gents who will be playing at the AFCON.

MM: Another source of happiness for all associated with Pirates has to be Mbekezeli Mbokazi's move to the MLS. It comes after Mohau Nkota went to Saudi Arabia. Those moves must surely be encouragement for you?

KS: It is great motivation that our teammates are going overseas. They deserve to play there. Mbokazi has worked very hard and proven himself to be a great player, and I wish him good luck. Through him, I am seeing that anything is possible, but everyone has their time, and God won't give us all at the same time. Of course, like every player, I have the dream to play abroad, but I know my time will come. Everyone's time comes at the opportune time.

MM: How has the transition from 'lowly Galaxy' to the mighty Bucs' been for you personally? I mean, you have moved from being a virtual unknown

“OBVIOUSLY, THE MAIN AIM FOR US IS TO WIN AS MANY TROPHIES AS POSSIBLE. AND EVEN THE LEAGUE, WE WANT TO WIN IT. WE WANT TO WIN EVERY TROPHY.”

to literally a celebrity overnight.

KS: Hahaha, goodness, it is so much pressure playing for this club. Going to the mall with the family is now a mission because everyone wants to take pictures with me. But we must understand that people love us and we have to oblige them. I understand it is my everyday life, even when I go to the petrol station, they want to take pictures with me. These are the people who support us when we play. Also, a lot of people are not able to go to the stadiums to see us live, so that's nice for them when they see us in the streets or malls, and it is only fair that we give them our time.

MM: Speaking of Galaxy, your former teammate Khulumani Ndamane is going to the AFCON. Did you see that coming?

KS: I am very happy for him. He's my bra. We talk most of the time, and he deserves it. His story shows that in life, when it does not work out well the first time, other doors can open up. He was at [Kaizer] Chiefs and did not have it good, but then he moved to Galaxy, and now he's in the Bafana squad and going to the Nations Cup. I wish him well.

MM: What's your personal goal for the season, Kamo?

KS: It is my first season at Pirates, and I came here to win trophies. We have won





two already, and I also want to win the league title. And of course, I want to go to the World Cup and represent South Africa.

MM: Sure, you guys are top of the table, but we are not at the halfway mark, and Pirates have previously struggled to retain their lead until the end. Can you guys win the league this time around?

KS: We don't stress ourselves about what the other teams are doing. We are playing well, and all we have to do is focus on ourselves. We just want to do what we are doing. We are going to try by all means to be consistent so we don't drop off the table. We want to win the league, and we believe we can do it.

MM: Coach Abdeslam Ouaddou says you guys must remain humble.

KS: Ja, he says we must not get overexcited because there is still a very long way to go in the season. We must support each other. We can't just wait; we want to win the league. We must show it on the pitch. The good thing is that we have a big and strong squad that, even when the coach rotates the players, it does not feel like something is missing. We have what it takes to be champions this season.

MM: And I guess the league title will help make up for the CAF Champions League disaster. We expected Pirates to do well following last season's semi-final achievement, but not to make the group stages was just very poor.

KS: We are very disappointed because we'd had a meeting where we discussed our goals, and winning the

“MBOKAZI HAS WORKED VERY HARD AND PROVEN HIMSELF TO BE A GREAT PLAYER, AND I WISH HIM GOOD LUCK. THROUGH HIM, I AM SEEING THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.”

Champions League was one of those. But unfortunately, we lost, and we are out now. Because of that, the pressure is on us to win the league. We don't have a choice; we have to win it. Yet we know that everything happens through God's will and not how we like it. But we are going to do our best to win it.

MM: Kamo, I get that you are disappointed at missing out on the AFCON. But being here, seeing these kids who are on welfare, some of whom have no parents. What does it do for you in terms of realising that you actually have it good?

KS: Oh, yes, it really gives me the perspective that I am blessed. I thank God for the talent he has blessed me with. To be able to play for a club as big as Pirates, a club that is hugely supported throughout the country, is not easy; not many get to achieve that. And here I am part of it. I am really blessed, and yes, it is painful not to be going to the AFCON, but it could be worse.

MM: Thanks, Kamo.



DAVIDS: I'M READY TO LEAD A CLUB AGAIN

Maahier Davids, the younger brother of Fadlu Davids, holds extensive experience in coaching after stints with Santos, Ajax Cape Town, Free State Stars, Maritzburg United, Orlando Pirates and Ethiopian giants Saint George in various roles. He has worked with the likes of Ernst Middendorp, Roger de Sa, his brother Fadlu, and was Pitso Mosimane's assistant at Al Ahli, Al-Wahda, Abha and Estheghlal FC. However, Davids is now ready to find a club where he can implement his own coach philosophy. Whether in the Premier Soccer League, Africa or abroad, Davids brings all the ingredients and a wealth of experience to become a head coach in his own right. Cool, calm, collected, Davids opened up on his coaching journey so far, what he's learnt from the likes of Middendorp, De Sa and Mosimane, as well as which international coaches have inspired him in this interview with iDiski Times' DAVID KAPPEL. He also shared his views on the Betway Premiership title race, which players impressed him this season and shares his views on Bafana Bafana's chances at the AFCON and World Cup.

David Kappel: What have you been doing this year, between jobs?

Maahier Davids: I've been doing a lot, actually. The year has flown by, but of course, now it's always a time to reflect. It's always a time to look back on certain things that work, certain things that didn't work. So, for example, one of the things that I've done was, when we left Esteghlal in Iran, I was quite frustrated that, although there was an upturn in results, but then it somehow didn't quite kick on, for many reasons. But one of the things that I really had to look into is why, in terms of the system that we found the team in, we basically tried to stick with it until we had time to train, and why it didn't quite work as we had hoped. We found them in a three-defence line, say 3-4-3, and although it picked up results, especially in the Champions League, but in the league it was a little bit touch and go. Yeah, so looking into what we could have done better, and then actually really trying to go back into your question, what was I doing? One of the things was to look into this 3-4-3 system, and really study it, analyse it. So, looking at our games there, looking at international teams. I was studying Thomas Tuchel's Chelsea, and he played this similar system. I looked at Xabi Alonso's Leverkusen as well, and what he was doing. And also, Antonio Conte's Chelsea played a similar system.

DK: So you have done a lot of studying?

MD: Yeah, I was really taking the time to educate myself more, to study more, to visit clubs. Of course, I was in Tanzania with Simba during their run in a semi-final when they're playing Stellenbosch on their way to the final. Recently, I just came back from Morocco as well - I watched some games there,



and of course, again, spending time with the technical team and how they are implementing their methodology. So those are a couple of things that I've been doing, of course, watching a lot of games as well, catching up in African football, especially because I've been away for about three years, out of African football, local football, CAF Champions League as well. So yeah, but quite a bit busy.

DK: Last time we spoke was actually two years ago in December, you said you wanted to do your UEFA Pro Licence. Did you manage to do it?

MD: No, not yet. I applied last year. Unfortunately, I didn't get in. So, yeah, a little bit of a delay for now, but hopefully with the next one, I can get in.

DK: Obviously, you were part of Pitso Mosimane's technical team. How have you experienced working with him?

MD: To be honest, it was quite an easy fit. I must say, I think what helped was my background, that I've done many different roles in my career leading up to that point - from head coach, assistant, youth team coach, reserve team coach. So they, of course, already had a way of training, a way of doing things, so it was for me just to try to fit in. But at the same time, try to add value and try to improve things. And I must say, they were quite open to a lot of things. And yeah, I think it was a good fit. And we definitely took steps in terms of how we're doing things there.

DK: And now have you kind of been waiting for coach Pitso to get a new job, or are you also on the lookout yourself?

MD: I'm also on the lookout. Look at myself. I think Coach Pitso is in a different stage of his career to what I am. I'm basically starting out. So I think

it would be silly for me to close doors at this stage of my career. If something interesting pops up. Yeah, why not?

DK: So, if you could decide where to coach next, your ideal next job, where would you pick?

MD: I think the natural progression for me at this stage, especially with all the travelling and experiences I've had, and different coaches – I worked with coach Pitso, coach Middendorp, of course with Fadlu [Davids], with Roger [De Sa], being at different clubs, assistant coach, being a head coach as well. I think now it's probably a time where I have to look at taking the next step again, and going into leading a team, leading the club again, as the head coach, or head manager, whatever you want to call it. And then it's not really a case of a specific place. I think, with the right backing, the right club, wherever it is, and you can do something good. I'll definitely consider it and go for it.

DK: You mentioned those different coaches you have worked with, like Pitso, Ernst Middendorp, Fadlu, and Roger De Sa - what lessons have you learnt from their different philosophies, and which type of football do you prefer?

MD: I think taking into account the different coaching styles, personalities that I've worked with, with those coaches that you mentioned, the important thing is for my personality to come out of it and my ideas. And at this stage, there's a lot of coaches who say, 'No, I like a position-based style,' I like a high-pressing style.' I think you have to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the players that you've got, and the state of the club that you're in. I mean, it's different when you walk into a club that's aiming for - you have to win the league, then you can't play counter-attacking football. Then it doesn't matter what I like. Or if you join a club, it's 15 games to go; we have to keep the club up. You have to do whatever you can to keep the club up. So that is a little bit where I say, 'Yeah, it's hard to pin down exactly what I like'. But of course, I want to attack. I want to attack as much as possible, because the game is about scoring goals, more goals than opponents. And it's more fun, it's more fun to attack.

DK: Maybe, let me rephrase a little bit. If you look at the big European coaches, Pep Guardiola, Jurgen Klopp, maybe Jose Mourinho, Carlo Ancelotti, who does your coaching style resonate most with?

MD: A difficult one. The easy answer is to say, I like a little bit of everything. For example, of course, with Pep, dominating possession, positional play. With Klopp, again, the intensity that you play with. So I think the modern game is also going in that direction, having good positional play, being vertical, being intensity, with a pressing structure. I mean, nowadays, if you look at European football, especially the Premier League, there are longer balls that are coming into play. Everybody's



“NORMALLY BY THIS STAGE OF THE SEASON, SUNDOWNS IS GONE. SO IF THERE'S ANY TIME TO DO, IT IS NOW.”

pressing high, so now you have to play a bit more direct and maybe focus a bit more on set pieces. But of course, the coaches that I have followed over the years, of course, Pep is definitely one. Thomas Tuchel is another one. Klopp, of course, right at the tip of football, the elite. And of course, Thomas Tuchel has done a fantastic job wherever he has been, especially now with England. And I followed his journey quite a bit. And I like how his honesty, his clarity in his speech, comes through, and it's very clear in how he wants to play.

DK: I saw Kabelo Rangoaga with the U21 national team - would you be keen on coaching in the Bafana youth ranks perhaps?

MD: I think it would be an honour as a South African to represent your country at any level. It would definitely be a huge honour to me.

DK: Do you follow PSL football? What do you make of the level in SA?

MD: Yeah, of course, being away, you missed out quite a bit. But the last two to three months, I caught up quite a bit and watched quite a bit of games. So quite interesting how the league has evolved and developed. Now, of course, at this stage, not really a one-horse race where Pirates are on top

of the log. So, I've been up to date with things...

DK: In your opinion, do Orlando Pirates have what it takes to end Mamelodi Sundowns' title run?

MD: Why not? I think, especially with them being out of CAF [Champions League] and where they are right now, the stage of the season to be so close - normally by this stage of the season, Sundowns is gone. So if there's any time to do it, it is now.

DK: Which players have impressed you the most this season in the PSL?

MD: Yes, I'm not going to go to the obvious in Mbokazi and these ones. But there's Sebelebele. When I saw him make his debut and the speed of his running, the bravery that he has, getting the ball and really running at them. Playing on the right, playing on the left, playing as a winger, then as a wing-back, and then I think he made a step up to the national team as well. He's somebody that really caught my eye. He is a typical South African player, which you don't really easily find abroad.

DK: Have you been approached by any PSL clubs recently?

MD: No, officially, no, there hasn't been any contact.

DK: Looking at Bafana, there is a lot of positivity. How far do you think we can go at AFCON?

MD: Well, I think they've shown in the last AFCON that they can go all the way. So I think we're two years later, the team has evolved even further, developed further, and grown together even more. I hope they can go all the way. I really hope so. I think they've got to go all the way.

DK: What should be a realistic target at the World Cup?

MD: I think the group is not an easy group but it could've been worse. Of course playing Mexico in the opening will be a big challenge, but it's a nice challenge because a lot of the pressure will be on Mexico, so we can play with a bit more freedom. And then, of course, the last team is not be confirmed but will be a difficult game as well. But this new format of the World Cup is giving us a chance, if we don't finish in the top two, that we can still qualify finishing in third place. Yeah, of course, you don't want to aim for third place, but you want to aim to qualify and it doesn't really matter at this stage [how] - yes, you want to finish number one, that's the easier [knockout] draw, but the most important thing is to get to the next round. And I think that that should still be our game, do our best to get to the knockout stages.

DK: How would you summarise the job Hugo Broos has done? In the beginning, there were quite a few sceptical voices.

MD: Fantastic. I don't think anybody



"I THINK THEY'VE SHOWN IN THE LAST AFCON THAT THEY CAN GO ALL THE WAY. SO I THINK WE'RE TWO YEARS LATER, THE TEAM HAS EVOLVED EVEN FURTHER."

predicted, when he stepped in, that we would qualify for the World Cup, that we will get third place in the AFCON and be another AFCON now. But besides that, I think what he has really developed is a certain culture within the Bafana setup. And you can see it when they play, they're not just playing, but there's a certain hunger, a certain excitement, that they want to win. They're enjoying themselves. There's a good connection between the players and the staff. So out of everything, I think that's probably the biggest thing. And I think a lot of players now want to be involved in it, because you can feel it, you can smell it. You know that there's something happening with Bafana.

DK: You are still one of the youngest coaches - turning 40 in Jan. What lessons would you share with young coaches?

MD: The journey is not a straight line. It's a lot of ups and downs and a lot of highs and a lot of lows. And it's important not to get too high, not get too low when you're in those moments, but keep on doing the basics. Keep on working hard, keeping on doing what you have to do to get to where you want to go. And ultimately, there's a big chance that you'll get there.

DK: Thank you, Maahier. All the best for your next job.



EVERY DREAM **HAS A GOAL.**
MZANSI HAS A NEW COACH

OLD MUTUAL, THE FINANCIAL COACH
BEHIND YOUR DREAMS

FSP & Ins. Ts & Cs.



OSWIN & THE NEW ENERGY RISES

With the countdown ticking — less than two weeks to the start of the CAF Africa Cup of Nations in Morocco, and under 185 days until the FIFA World Cup in the USA, Mexico, and Canada — the excitement around Bafana Bafana is building fast. As preparations ramp up, iDiski Times will be diving deep into each position on the pitch, analysing the frontrunners, the fringe players, and the rising stars, hoping to catch Hugo Broos' eye for these two monumental tournaments.



Last week, we profiled the playmakers, and this week we stay in the creative lane by turning our attention to Bafana Bafana's wide attacking options.

It's worth noting, of course, that the line between winger and number 10 has blurred in the modern game, and several of the players on this list can comfortably operate in both roles, shifting inside or drifting wide depending on the tactical demands.

What makes this group particularly fascinating is what it says about South African football right now. The last few seasons have brought a surge of fresh talent, players who have injected energy, unpredictability and belief into the national setup.

Nowhere is that clearer than here: of all the names on this list, only one featured in Broos' early squads during his first two years in charge. The rest represent a new wave, who are ambitious, dynamic and eager to push Bafana to even greater heights.

The Men In Possession:

***Oswin Appollis**



**OLD MUTUAL,
THE FINANCIAL COACH
BEHIND YOUR DREAMS**



(Orlando Pirates)

If there was ever a player who truly grabbed his chance with both hands, it's Oswin Appollis. The Cape-born attacker only made his Bafana debut late in 2023, and while he was part of the AFCON squad in 2024, his real breakthrough came afterwards.

Once Broos handed him a starting berth, Appollis refused to give it back. With his clever movement, fearlessness on the ball and eye for goal, he quickly became Bafana's most productive attacker, finishing as the leading goal contributor in both the AFCON and World Cup qualifiers. His seamless transition to Pirates has only strengthened the feeling that South Africa has a star entering his prime.

***Mohau Nkota
(Al Ettifaq)**

It's been a rapid rise for Mohau Nkota, who made his Bafana debut less than half a year ago yet carries himself like a seasoned international.

That calmness is nothing new, he showed the same composure when he burst onto the scene for Pirates in 2024. Now in Saudi Arabia with Al Ettifaq, the 21-year-old has adapted quickly, showcasing maturity beyond his years.

With his pace, directness and confidence, Nkota feels like one of the brightest prospects for the next decade of South African football.

***Relebohile Mofokeng
(Orlando Pirates)**

Arguably the face of South Africa's new wave, Mofokeng hasn't quite exploded into the 2025/26 season as expected, but his talent remains undimmed.

Speculation swirled about whether he would join Nkota abroad, but the timing of that move looks likely to shift to a future window. Even so, Mofokeng, who can win a match with a single moment of magic, remains an irresistible option for Broos.

His flair, creativity and ability to unlock defences make him a player who can change the tone of a game instantly.

***Tshepang Moremi
(Orlando Pirates)**

Since arriving at Pirates, Moremi has started to show exactly why Broos called him up while he was still at AmaZulu. Now he's turning that early promise into a consistent end-product.

Quick, aggressive, and always looking to take on defenders, the winger seems to be hitting form at precisely the right moment.

With AFCON around the corner, Moremi has driven himself into pole position for a place in the squad, and if his upward trajectory continues, he could be peaking right on time for the

World Cup.

The Back-Ups:***Elias Mokwana
(Al Hazem)**

Just a year ago, Mokwana looked like a guaranteed pick for Broos, sharp, energetic and brimming with confidence.

But a lack of consistent minutes stalled his rise, pushing him down the hierarchy. Missing out on AFCON looked increasingly likely, but his return to club form came just at the right time. His current steady run of games in Saudi Arabia could just reignite his momentum, and he now has a chance at AFCON to regain his place in the squad and hopefully hang onto it for the World Cup

**Kamogelo Sebelebele
(Orlando Pirates)**

Sebelebele is one of those modern, Swiss-army-knife footballers who can slot into almost any role and still make an impact. Earlier this season,



he practically kicked the Bafana door down with a string of eye-catching performances for Pirates.

His form has cooled slightly since then, but his blistering pace, comfort on either flank, and ability to contribute both defensively and offensively keep him firmly in the conversation.

In a squad where versatility is gold, Sebelebele may have an advantage over his rivals.

Mihlali Mayambela (Aris Limassol)

Mayambela has been one of Broos' trusted call-ups for much of the Belgian's reign, offering width, experience and steady output.

But as younger, more explosive attackers emerge, his position has become less secure. Still, Broos knows exactly what he gets with the Cyprus-based winger, work rate, discipline and an understanding of the system.

If others falter or injuries pile up, Mayambela could easily find himself

back in favour.

Mduduzi Shabalala (Kaizer Chiefs)

Shabalala's recent rise has been one of Chiefs' bright sparks in an otherwise turbulent period.

As the club's most consistent performer over two seasons, his Bafana recognition has come at the perfect time to fuel his confidence. With sharp vision, clever movement and impressive technical ability, he offers something a little different.

If he strings together a run of strong displays for Chiefs, he could become one of the more intriguing options for Broos. Named as a player on standby for the AFCON.

Devin Titus (Stellenbosch)

It's been a difficult campaign for both Titus and Stellenbosch, but the speedy attacker has become the heartbeat of the team over the past two seasons.

A relentless worker with an eye for goal, Titus often embodies Stellenbosch's spirit, and his national-team prospects may hinge on whether he can help turn their season around.

If Stellies find their rhythm again, Titus could very well surge back into contention for a Bafana call-up.

The Contenders:

Tashreeq Matthews (Mamelodi Sundowns)

Still waiting for his first senior Bafana Bafana appearance, Matthews remains one of the most puzzling omissions of the Broos era. Even during an eye-catching spell in Sweden, the attacker never cracked a call-up, and that trend has continued since his return to South Africa.

At Sundowns, he has been nothing short of electric, scoring, assisting, and becoming one of the Brazilians' most dangerous outlets. Yet the coach's stance hasn't shifted.

Unless something changes dramatically, Matthews may end up being one of those players whose national-team career only truly begins once Broos departs.

Siyanda Ndlovu (Golden Arrows)

Another uncapped prospect knocking loudly on the door, Ndlovu, formerly known as Mthanti, has enjoyed a breakthrough year at Golden Arrows.

Just 22, he has blended unpredictability with flair, chipping in with goals and consistently troubling defences.



His stock continues to rise, and a move to a bigger club feels inevitable. If he maintains this trajectory, a Bafana call-up is only a matter of time.

**Antonio Van Wyk
(SV Ried)**

Van Wyk quietly settled into Austrian football last season, helping Ried earn promotion, but this campaign has seen him take a major leap.

Playing in the top flight, and sporting a fresh look after chopping off his trademark locks, he has delivered standout performances that have drawn praise and interest from larger European clubs.

Gifted with a unique, direct style, van Wyk could be one of South Africa’s wildcards for 2026 if his rise continues.

**Kutlwano Lethlaku
(Mamelodi Sundowns)**

Lethlaku might seem like a long shot right now, but the U20 star is highly regarded within Sundowns’ system.

If he begins to earn more minutes over the coming months, he has the technical ability and confidence to surprise a few people and push himself into the World Cup conversation far sooner than expected.

**Langelihle Phili
(Stellenbosch)**

Another Amajita standout who could force his way into the Bafana reckoning is Stellenbosch’s rising star, Phili. Despite the club enduring a stuttering campaign, the young winger has been one of the few bright sparks in a difficult season. In truth, Stellies would likely be far worse off without him.

Even with his spell away at the U20 World Cup, Phili has remained their most reliable attacking outlet, already sitting on seven goals across all competitions. His fearlessness in the final third, willingness to take on defenders, and knack for producing something out of nothing give him that elusive X-factor every coach craves.

If he maintains this scoring rhythm and continues growing in confidence, it’s

easy to imagine him being firmly in the 2026 conversation. His trajectory is pointing in only one direction.

**Named in the squad for AFCON finals.*

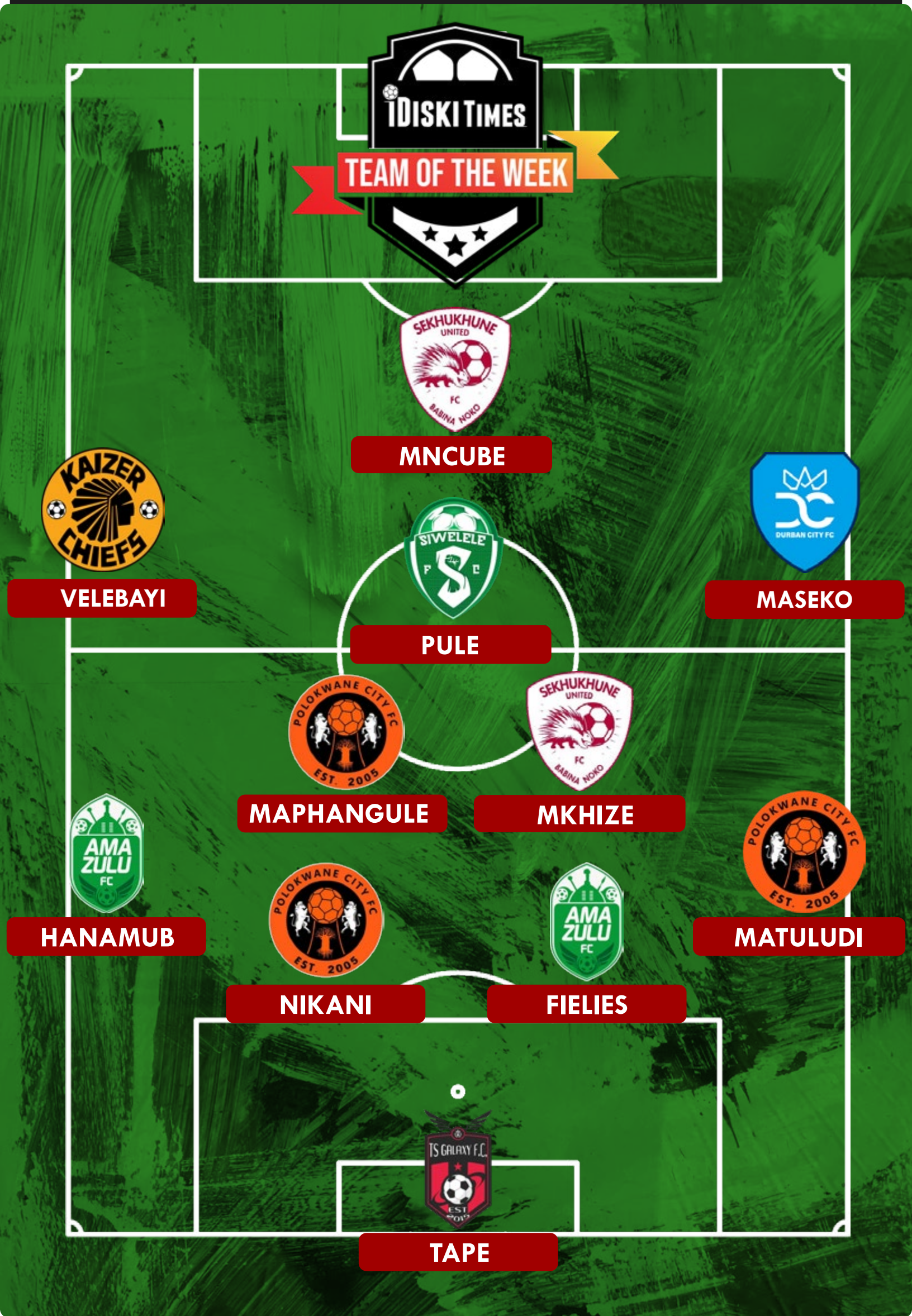


OLDMUTUAL

DO GREAT THINGS EVERY DAY

FSP & Ins. Ts & Cs.

IDISKI TEAM OF THE WEEK - PREMIERSHIP 2-7 DECEMBER



ACE OF THE WEEK:
ORLANDO PIRATES

Our iDiski Times Aces of the Week are Abdeslam Ouaddou and his resurgent Orlando Pirates, who

capped off a turbulent year in style by lifting the Carling Knockout trophy after a grinding final against Marumo Gallants on Saturday. It took extra-time at the Peter Mokaba Stadium for the Buccaneers to finally break the resistance of a Gallants side, a team Ouaddou once called his own, but once the breakthrough came, the result felt inevitable. The triumph was more than just silverware; it was a statement. Under the calm authority of the Moroccan tactician, who stepped into Jose Riveiro's shoes at the start of the campaign, Pirates have rediscovered their swagger, finishing the year perched confidently at the top of the Betway Premiership.





The Drawing Board with Moritz Kossmann

This week, we continue The Drawing Board series with iDiski Times' coaching guru MORITZ KOSSMANN.

Born in Germany, but having spent most of his life in South Africa, he came to the fore while working at the Ubuntu Football Academy. Moritz was then the head coach of Cape Town City's DStv

Diski Challenge team for the 2023/24 campaign and also in charge of the club youth's department. In June 2024, Kossmann became part of the technical team at the Austrian club SV Ried.

His columns have proved increasingly popular, and have been republished (and translated) worldwide. He has also provided content for one of the world-leading tactics blogs - spielverlagerung.com.

Expert Interview: Evangelos Vellios

This week, we have the great pleasure of speaking to current Stellenbosch FC DDC head coach Evangelos Vellios. Evangelos has been in his current role at Stellenbosch for over 6 years. In this time, he has won the Diski Challenge two times, and his teams have made waves representing South Africa abroad in international Premier League tournaments. Most crucially, coach Vellios has played a critical role in the rise of players through the ranks. A few well-known ones being Jayden Adams, Devin Titus, Antonio van Wyk or most recently Langelihle Phili. We talked to coach Vellios about his coaching journey as well as picking his brain on the critical transition process from junior to senior football.

Coach Van! Thank you for taking the time to talk to us on this platform. It's a great pleasure to have you featured here. First of all, can you tell the readers a little bit about your coaching journey so far? Where it all started and where you are currently at.

EV: Coach Moritz, iDiski, and to all the readers, thank you so much for having me on this fantastic publication. It's truly an honour.

A few years ago, my grandmother showed me one of my old primary school notebooks. On the back pages were drawings of formations and player names from my team, Benfica. Looking at those sketches, I realised that from a very young age I already understood something important: God hadn't blessed me with the talent to play football at the highest level, but He had given me a deep passion for the game and a dream to one day become a coach.

When I finished school, I went on to study Sport Science at the University of Pretoria in 2003 and immediately started coaching in the Tuks Football Club Youth Program. From 2003 to 2007, I coached age groups from U11 to U16. Then, in 2008, at just 24 years old, Coach Steve Barker, who believed in my potential, gave me the opportunity to coach the Tuks SAB team, which served as the Reserve team for AmaTuks, who were playing in the NFD at the time.

In 2012, the University of Pretoria appointed me Head Coach of the Student Team competing in the USSA Nationals and later in the Varsity Football Cup. In 2015, after a short stint as MDC coach, I stepped into the role of Assistant Coach for AmaTuks, who were then in the PSL. In 2016, I was involved in a tragic car accident that set me back for a couple of years. But in 2018, I returned to take on the role of Interim Head Coach of AmaTuks in the NFD, leading the team for 17 games.

Then, in 2019, following Stellenbosch FC's promotion to the PSL under my mentor Steve Barker, the club approached me to coach the MDC team and help align the U21s to the First Team structures. I've been serving as the Diski Coach ever since and continue to work closely with Coaches Steve and Wes at the First Team

level.

Before we talk about developing talent to fulfil its potential, it is obviously critical to identify talent first. Can you give us some insight into your process when it comes to spotting the best young players around the country and perhaps some advice on how we can get better at this part of the game?

EV: I believe there are two distinct approaches to identifying potential players for our club.

The first is the "wow" moment. It's unplanned; you watch a player, and he simply takes your breath away. It's almost like love at first sight in the dating world. The second approach is more intentional. When we know there's a need for a specific position in the team/Club, we observe opponents, whether in friendly matches or league games, with that position in mind and monitor players who fit that profile.

Talent ID and Scouting is a simple yet incredibly complex art. But if I had to share my biggest takeaway, it would be this: keep it simple. A footballer can do three basic things on the pitch: score goals, create goals, or stop goals. For a Diski player to progress into our First Team, we've found that he must be able to do at least two of those at a high and consistent level. Within that framework, we always ask: what is the player's superpower? For example, Haaland's is scoring, while Kevin De Bruyne's is passing. Once we identify a player's superpower, I pay close attention to two universal skills: first touch and turning. These are fundamental, and they elevate whatever superpower a player possesses. For instance, a great passer who can't receive well will struggle to consistently showcase his strength.

Finally, once those boxes are ticked, we assess the player's physical qualities, his football intelligence, and whether he can be coached to adapt to our club's philosophy. We also look at his behavioural traits to determine whether he can fit into our culture, one built on honesty, hard work, and dedication.

Secondly, if we look at South African football, we see a pattern that is also quite evident globally. We get really high-potential junior players that look like the next great thing. Then comes the period where they have to be integrated into senior first-team football, and somehow things fall apart. You seemed to have a really good success rate with your diskie team in terms of transitioning players into first-team football. Please give us some insight here as well as some advice on



how to do this better.

EV: After years of supporting highly talented footballers through the transition to senior football, I’ve noticed several consistent character and emotional traits among those who succeed. The players who endure this transition best are the ones who genuinely love the game, not just what football can give them. They embrace the process, from training to studying the game, and they are never “too big”; in fact, they often ask to play Diski even when they’re already regulars at the PSL level. Another key trait is high self-esteem paired with low ego, as players who possess high egos but low self-esteem almost always struggle and often fail in the short to medium term. We also expect our players to rely on their behaviours rather than their talent to sustain their careers. Honest, hardworking players form the cornerstone of our club, and we keep them grounded through physically and mentally demanding training that tests their desire and commitment. Ultimately, the players who embrace the process, stay disciplined, and never fall out of love with the game are the ones who go on to build long, sustainable careers. If a player is being considered for PSL football, it’s clear he already has talent—talent may open the door, but ultimately it is mentality that sustains a career.

Finally, we always ask our guest experts to finish of with sharing one of their favourite practices. One practice that you are famous for is your risk vs reward game. So perhaps that would be a great one to finish this with.

EV: I knew you would ask me this one :) I learned the Risk vs. Reward Possession drill in 2010 from Ben Bartlett during a coaching course in England. Its purpose is to teach players when to keep the ball (low-reward situations where losing possession would be costly, like a centre-back dribbling in their own half with a simple pass available) and when to take risks (high-reward moments, such as a winger going 1v1 near the box to create a chance).

Setup

- 3 teams of 4–6 players each (can be

- expanded to 6–8 depending on level).
- Pitch size should match player numbers and ability (my preferred format: 6v6 + 6 Neutrals (N)).
- Neutrals play for both teams.
- Players in the scoring zones: 2 touches / lateral side players: 1 touch

Objectives & Scoring

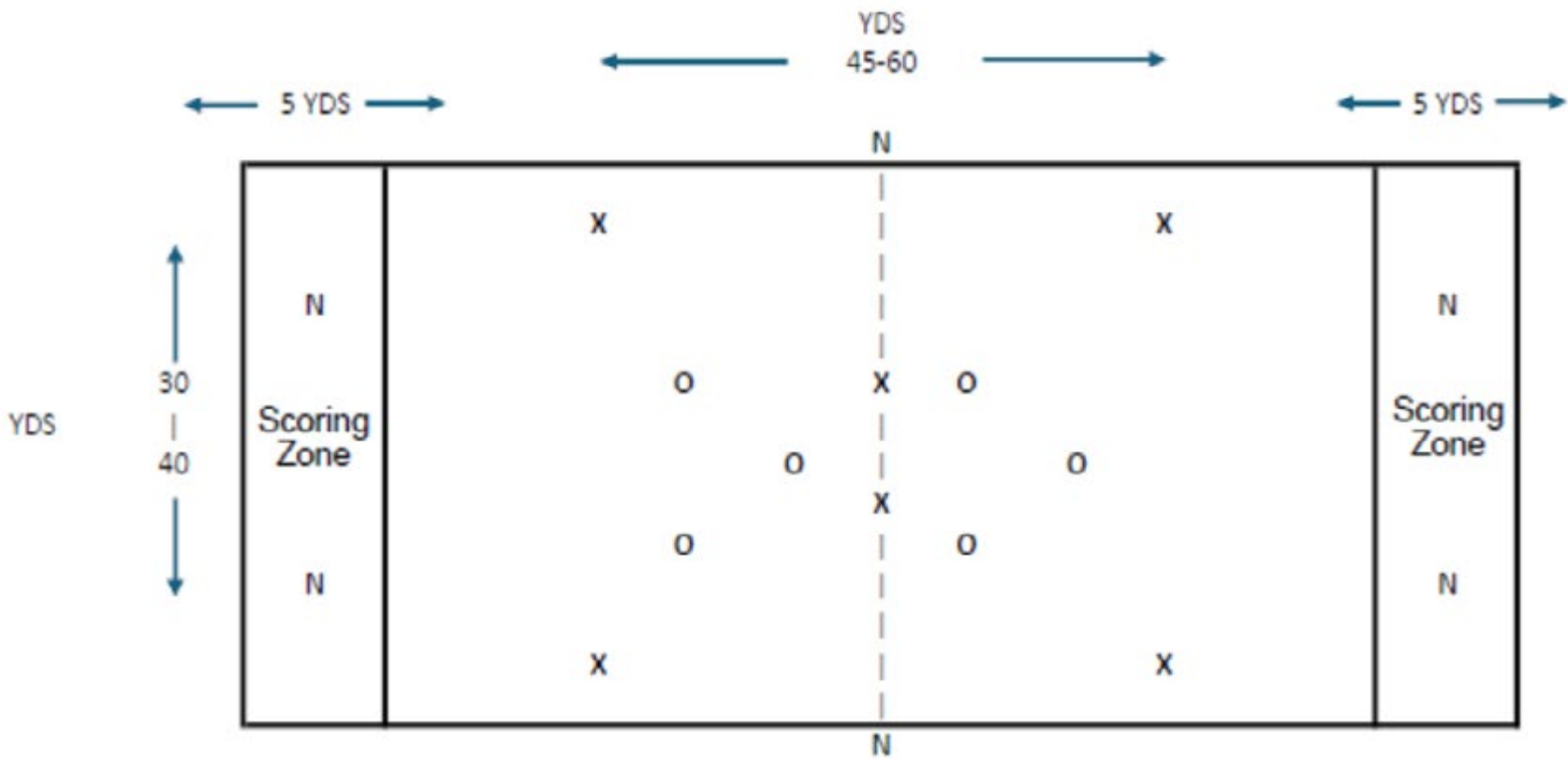
- The team in possession (Team X) aims to complete 8 passes and then score by playing the ball into the opposite Neutrals in the far scoring zone (passes to lateral neutrals count towards the pass total).
- 1 point for every completed pass sequence (i.e., delivering the ball into the far scoring zone after 8 passes).
- Once the ball crosses the central line, if the far scoring zone is closed/blocked by defenders, the possession team may switch to the opposite scoring zone to finish and still score 1 point.
- If Team X plays the ball back into their own scoring zone at any point while counting, the pass count resets to zero. This rule creates the tension between: Risking a dribble or forward/risky pass vs. keeping possession and recycling play back to safety (Risk vs. Reward decision-making)

Variations

- When the pressing team regains the ball, they must first play into a scoring zone before they can begin their pass count.
- Coaches may place mini-goals in the outside channels for transition scoring or possession options.
- Add more neutrals inside the main playing zone to create overloads for the possession team.
- Points for counter pressing, possession disruptions under a certain amount of passes, etc, Coaches can play around with the drill to suit their team’s needs.

Thank you for your time, coach and all the very best for the rest of the season.

EV: Thank you so much for having me, and I hope the readers enjoyed the interview... God Bless





FIRST DEPOSIT MATCH

R20 000



BET WITH THE BEST

OPERATOR LICENSED BY THE GAMING AND RACING BOARD. NO PERSON UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS PERMITTED TO GAMBLE. NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PROGRAM TOLL FREE COUNSELLING LINE 0800 086 088 OR VIA WHATSAPP HELP TO 076 876 0760. WINNERS KNOW WHEN TO STOP.