Issue 8 / December 2023

# CHAMPIONS

A LIFETIME OF MEMORIES

**MAGAZINE** 



RUGBY \* SOCCER
CRICKET 2023/2024 \* GRAND PRIX
GOLF \* WOMEN IN SPORT \* MOTOGP

**WWW.CHAMPIONARISING.CO.ZA** 

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#### CHAMPIONS MAGAZINE





What is next for SA Rugby and the 2024 test match dates have been released!

#### CRICKET

T20, Indian Test matches and much more excitement awaits our local and international cricket season

#### GOLF

Our golfing heroes come together with the international golfers for the PGA 2023

#### **TRAVEL**

We travel to see our heroes win or lose on the international circuit. Here are some great offers

#### **IN MEMORY**



TERRY VENABLES

6 January 1943 - 25 November 2023



O3 November 1913 -11 October 2023



two-time MotoGP winner, marries his fiancée Courtney Renniers in Stellenbosch.

## ROBIN BALL

Robin rounds up sport from November and what is coming in December and 2024

FIRST WORD WITH

#### **GRAND PRIX**

Verstappen has been unstoppable this year and Red Bull can't be more pleased! We have the new racing calendar for 2024.

#### **MOTORGP**

72 hours with our homegrown hero of Motorgp, Brad Binder

#### **WOMEN IN SPORT**

We celebrate women in sport

#### SOCCER

EPL, AFCON, Euro 2024 and more stories about local and international soccer. Always first with the news and match tables



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**NUMBERS ETC** 



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CAPE TOWN 9-10 DECEMBER 2023

Email: robin@championarising.co.za

Accommodation ; Hospitality and Ticket package options From only R350 / R450 per ticket per Sat 09 / Sun 10 Dec / subject to availability. Full payment is required once our confirmation of your Cpt 7s package is confirmed.

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# FIRST WORD FROM ROBIN BALL

The transforming of South Africa's thinking was the key to South Africa's success over the past 6 years: thereby allowing South Africa to win two consecutive Rugby World Cups: 2019 + 2023. Erasmus's decision to name Kolisi as his captain in 2018 was inspired. A multiracial crowd greeted South Africa's first black test skipper- as well as the most transformed Bok side in history- at Ellis Park for the first Test of that series against England. Although SA Rugby continued to enforce racial targets, the players themselves spoke about the how the culture has changed, and how 'transformation' was no longer a word laced with negative connotations. The 'Stronger Together' began to gather momentum, and the shift in mindset has had a positive impact on the results. This has always had the aim of peaking at the 2023 showpiece.

Its now time to look ahead as we welcome the forthcoming Indian Tour (after having hosted a thrilling CWC ODI & the recent T20 series vs Australia) of SA: The first T20 match has taken place at Kingsmead in Durban which was rained out. The Second T20 in PE resulted in an excellent 5 wicket win for South Africa, with Reeza Hendriks in good form.

The 14 Dec is Wanderers: T20 continuing with the 3 match ODI series. We then start of the 2 x 5 day Test series: Boxing Day: 26-30 Dec at Centurion again; before the 2nd 5 day Test at Newlands, Cape Town: 03-07 January 2023. We are all keenly awaiting the opportunity to see a return to form of Themba Bavuma, in any format of the Summer of Cricket in South Africa.

Enjoy the December / January holiday months, as the weather keeps us all in the sun, as life shines strongly on us all. Rassie and Champion Tours will be launching a RWC Corporate Support Team to travel to Australia 2027 early in the New Year of 2024.

Guaranteed 4 Year Build up Springbok match tickets both locally in SA and internationally as we pursue our historic 5th Title in Oct 2027!?

Certainly enough time for all my friends & Clients to financially prepare....



Sean, Robin; and Megan



Xmas guys & gals at the Cpt 7s on Sunday 10 Dec 2023.



South Africa crowned Dubai Sevens champions Planet Rugby

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOUR ALL IN THE GRANDSTANDS. BEST, ROBIN BALL.

# CRICKET















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**Durban's Super Giants** 



**Joburg Super Kings** 



MI Cape Town



**Paarl Royals** 



**Pretoria Capitals** 



Sunrisers Eastern Cape

## **BETWAY SA20 WORLD CUP XI**

### Several Betway SA20 stars were on national duty during the recent ICC World Cup.

We examined their performances and have selected our very own Betway SA20 World Cup XI.

The Durban's Super Giants boast the best representation with four players, while champions Sunrisers Eastern Cape have three. In our selection, Joburg Super Kings, MI Cape Town, Paarl Royals and Pretoria Capitals all have a solitary player.

#### 1. QUINTON DE KOCK

(South Africa, Durban's Super Giants)
Runs: 594 | HS: 174 | Ave: 59.40 | SR: 107.02
Dismissals: 20 | Catches: 19 | Stumpings: 1
The former Durban's Super Giants captain
was intent to bid farewell to the ODI arena
in style. He certainly delivered on his
promise with four sparkling centuries,
including a mammoth 174 against
Bangladesh. He was also superb behind
the stumps.



(England, Sunrisers Eastern Cape)
Runs: 404 | HS: 140 | Ave: 44.88 | SR: 101
The new Sunrisers Eastern Cape recruit
cut a lone figure at the top of a struggling
English batting line-up that included
fellow Betway SA20 stars Jos Buttler,
Moeen Ali and Liam Livingstone. Malan's
trademark is his consistency regardless of
white-ball formats and he showed why
the Sunrisers will lean heavily on him in
the defense of their title in Season 2.

#### 3. RASSIE VAN DER DUSSEN

(South Africa, MI Cape Town)
Runs: 448 | HS: 133 | Ave: 49.77 | SR: 84.52
Van der Dussen and Malan are cut from
the same cloth as they form the backbone
of their team's innings. The MI Cape Town
top-order batter struck two centuries
during the tournament to show the world
just what a classy player he is.







#### 4. AIDEN MARKRAM

(South Africa, Sunrisers Eastern Cape)
Runs: 406 | HS: 106 | Ave: 45.11 | SR: 110.92
The Sunrisers Eastern Cape captain started the tournament in breathtaking fashion with the record-breaking fastest century ever in a World Cup. Australia's Glenn Maxwell has since overtaken it, but it only inspired Markram to push harder as he also struck a quality 90 in the successful run-chase against Pakistan.

#### 5. HEINRICH KLAASEN

(South Africa, Durban's Super Giants)
Runs: 373 | HS: 109 | Ave: 41.44 | SR: 133.35
Arguably the best middle-order white-ball
batter across formats, Klaasen carried his
superb form of the last 12 months into the
World Cup. The Super Giants star was in a
particularly belligerent mood against
England when he struck a superb century.

#### 6. DAVID MILLER

(South Africa, Paarl Royals)
Runs: 356 | HS: 101 | Ave: 44.50 | SR: 107.87
The veteran left-hander kept his best for last with a brilliant century in the semifinal against Australia in Kolkata, but unfortunately the Paarl Royals captain could not carry the Proteas single-handedly over the line. He remains one of the premier white-ball batters in the world.

#### 7. MARCO JANSEN

(South Africa, Sunrisers Eastern Cape)
Wickets: 17 | BB: 3/31 | Ave: 26.47 | Eco: 6.52
Runs: 157 | HS: 75\* | Ave: 31.40
A debut World Cup tournament to
remember for the lanky Sunrisers Eastern
Cape all-rounder. He is certainly worthy of
the title now due to his regular strikes,
especially in the Powerplay, and also his
valuable lower-order runs contribution.

\*NEWLY-SIGNED FOR BETWAY SA20. ALL IMAGES COURTESY ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP/GETTY IMAGES.











# SA vs INDIA BETWAY TEST SERIES











All packages subject to change and availability

#### SUPERSPORT PARK, CENTURION HOSPITALITY

# SOUTH AFRICA VS INDIA BOXING DAY 5 DAY TEST: 26-30 DEC 2023

- Official Match Tickets to use one of our private hospitality viewing suites for you and your guests
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Max 20 persons
Day 1, 2 or 3
10% Discount for buying day 4
Day 5 currently not available





#### 8. GERALD COETZEE

(South Africa, Joburg Super Kings) Wickets: 20 | BB: 4/44 | Ave: 19.80 | Eco:

6.23

Runs: 54 | HS: 22 | Ave: 13.50

The bigger the stage, the brighter Coetzee shines. The Joburg Super Kings fast bowler enjoyed a breakout tournament. Initially selected as a replacement for the injured Anrich Nortje, Coetzee grasped the opportunity with both hands to finish as South Africa's leading wicket-taker in the tournament.





(South Africa, Durban's Super Giants)
Wickets: 15 | BB: 4/46 | Ave: 24.66 | Eco: 4.15
Runs: 49 | HS: 40 | Ave: 19.66
The fairytale story of the World Cup. All
the DSG's captain's hard work in
recovering from his Achilles rupture in
rapid time paid off at the tournament.
Maharaj was miserly throughout while
picking up crucial wickets, and also held
his nerve to hit the winning runs against
Pakistan with last man Tabraiz Shamsi. He
is now also officially the No 1 ODI bowler
in the world.



#### 10. ADIL RASHID

(England, Pretoria Capitals)
Wickets: 15 | BB: 3/42 | Ave: 27.53 | Eco: 5.18
Once again a tough tournament for the
defending champions England, but
Rashid kept chipping away even as the
defeats were piling up. He just edges out
Afghanistan and MI Cape Town captain
Rashid Khan (11 wickets) that drove his
team to their best-ever World Cup finish.



#### \*11. DILSHAN MADUSHANKA

(Sri Lanka, Durban's Super Giants) Wickets: 21 | BB: 5/80 | Ave: 25.00 | Eco:

6.70

The Durban's Super Giants may have pulled off a coup for Season 2 with Madushanka joining the Kingsmeadbased team. The young left-arm seamer was brilliant throughout the tournament, especially the dangerous Indian batting line-up when he picked up five wickets.

Date	Match Details	Time
Dec 10, Sun	South Africa vs India, 1st T20I	6:00 PM
	Kingsmead, Durban	04:00 PM GMT / 06:00 PM LOCAL
	Match starts at Dec 10, 16:00 GMT	
Dec 12, Tue	South Africa vs India, 2nd T20I	6:00 PM
	St George's Park, Gqeberha	04:00 PM GMT / 06:00 PM LOCAL
	Match starts at Dec 12, 16:00 GMT	
Dec 14, Thu	South Africa vs India, 3rd T20I	6:00 PM
	New Wanderers Stadium, Johannesburg	04:00 PM GMT / 06:00 PM LOCAL
Dec 17 Sun	Match starts at Dec 14, 16:00 GMT	
Dec 17, Sun	South Africa vs India, 1st ODI	10:00 AM
	New Wanderers Stadium, Johannesburg	08:00 AM GMT / 10:00 AM LOCAL
	Match starts at Dec 17, 08:00 GMT	
Dec 19, Tue	South Africa vs India, 2nd ODI	1:00 PM
	St George's Park, Gqeberha	11:00 AM GMT / 01:00 PM LOCAL
	Match starts at Dec 19, 11:00 GMT	
Dec 21, Thu	South Africa vs India, 3rd ODI	1:00 PM
	Boland Park, Paarl	11:00 AM GMT / 01:00 PM LOCAL
	Match starts at Dec 21, 11:00 GMT	
Dec 26, Tue - Dec 30, Sat	South Africa vs India, 1st Test	10:00 AM
	SuperSport Park, Centurion	08:00 AM GMT / 10:00 AM LOCAL
	Match starts at Dec 26, 08:00 GMT	
Jan 03, Wed - Jan 07, Sun	South Africa vs India, 2nd Test	10:30 AM
	Newlands, Cape Town	08:30 AM GMT / 10:30 AM LOCAL
	Match starts at Jan 03, 08:30 GMT	





# INDIA 'A' TOUR OF SOUTH AFRICA: SOME SENIORS MIGHT PLAY ONE OF THREE FIRST CLASS GAMES ..

NEW DELHI: Some of the senior team Test specialists might be sent early to South Africa to take part in India 'A' side's three-match 'shadow tour' of the country, which will be a pre-cursor to the all-important two-match Test series, starting on December 26.

The BCCI has always arranged 'A' team tours to countries where the senior team is supposed to travel for Test matches but after last year's Bangladesh series, the pathways cricket (A team tours, U-19 series) didn't happen as the sole focus was on the ODI World Cup.

However, the domestic performers will have a chance to showcase their skills as there will be as many as five or six 'A' games in first-class format between December and January.

There will be three 'Tests' (four-day games) against South Africa 'A' set to happen next month and another two to three against England Lions (England 'A') in January before India's five-match mega series against the senior English side.

"Yes, there are three four-day Tests between India 'A' and South Africa 'A' next month. The team for that will be announced in some days. Most of the consistent young performers along with those (seniors) who need some game time before the two Test matches in Centurion (December 26 to 30) and Cape Town (January 3-7) will be there," a BCCI source told PTI on condition of anonymity.

While the likes of Abhimanyu Easwaran, B Sai Sudharsan, Yash Dhull, Kona Bharat, Upendra Yadav and Saurabh Kumar are certainly going to be in the scheme of things, it would be interesting to see if seniors like

Ajinkya Rahane, Ravichandran Ashwin and Jaydev Unadkat get to play at least one four-day game as a tune-up to the African challenge. Test discard Jayant Yadav and Services off-spinner Pulkit Narang, the two red-ball off-spinners, who are often summoned at India nets during Test series, could also be discussed.

Among the young pacers, Vidwath Kaverappa, Kuldeep Sen, Harshit Rana and Umran Malik could well be in the mix with old guards like Navdeep Saini.

Mayank Agarwal was Ranji Trophy's highest scorer last season but with Rohit Sharma, Yashasvi Jasiwal, Shubman Gill in the scheme of things, whether the Karnataka veteran will get a recall is there to be seen.



#### SA vs INDIA BETWAY TEST SERIES

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# Premier League

SOCE





# DR KAIZER MOTAUNG HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY INDUCTED INTO THE SOUTH AFRICAN HALL OF FAME, PROUDLY IN COLLABORATION WITH TSOGO SUN.

Distinguished guests from the spheres of sports, entertainment, and government convened to honour an individual whose impact on football and the broader sports community in South Africa is immeasurable. Motaung, a name synonymous with South African sports excellence, now takes his rightful place among the nation's highest echelons of honour within the South African Hall of Fame.

#### A legend's status cemented 👏

Dr. Kaizer Motaung - founder and chairman of Kaizer Chiefs, has been officially inducted into the South African Hall of Fame. pic.twitter.com/uE6hnc5YQy

— SuperSport Football ⊕
(@SSFootball) November 9, 2023
"The visionary founder and Chairman
of the Kaizer Chiefs Football Club, Dr
Motaung, has not only sculpted the
present and future of football but has
also left an indelible legacy that will
inspire generations to come,"
remarked Johnny Burger, the
chairman of the South African Hall of
Fame, in his heartfelt address to the
attendees post-ceremony.

Hosted at the Montecasino Ballroom in Johannesburg, the induction ceremony highlighted the breadth and depth of Dr Motaung's influence, celebrating his unwavering dedication and profound impact on the sport, which has left an indelible mark on South Africa's history.



In a moving homage to Dr Motaung's extensive career, the South African Hall of Fame reiterated its commendation for his dual role as a world-class footballer and a pioneering administrator and business leader. His nomination and subsequent induction into the Hall of Fame have been lauded as a fitting tribute to his enduring commitment and positive influence on countless lives through sports and community engagement.

The list of previous inductees reads like a roster of the nation's heroes and includes former President Nelson Mandela, golf legend Gary Player, the 1995 and 2007 Springbok Rugby World Cup-winning teams, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and the 1996 African Nations Cupwinning Bafana Bafana team. Dr Motaung's name now stands among these icons, further solidifying his legacy.

The evening was a celebration and a reflection of the collaborative spirit between the South African Hall of Fame and Tsogo Sun, emphasising the vital importance of acknowledging and celebrating the remarkable individuals who contribute significantly to South Africa's rich tapestry of talent and achievement.



 $\mathbb{X}$ 

Dr. Kaizer Motaung Celebrated In Grand Style And Officially Inducted Into The South African Hall of Fame.

In a prestigious event that will be remembered for years to come, Dr. Kaizer Motaung has been officially inducted into The South African Hall of Fame, proudly in... Show more





# CAF LAUNCHES GLOBAL CAMPAIGN "OUR AFCON, OUR PRIDE" CELEBRATING IMPACT OF TOTALENERGIES CAF AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS TO BRING AFRICANS TOGETHER GLOBALLY

As part of the build-up to the TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations Cote d'Ivoire 2023,

the Confédération Africaine de Football ("CAF") has announced the launch of a new campaign, #OurAFCON, which is an integral part of the broader initiative of #PrideOfAfricanFootball.

The campaign is the main message and focus for the upcoming edition of the TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations. It celebrates African football and highlights the immense sense of pride that Africans around the world and in Africa feel during the competition. #PrideOfAfricanFootball is a celebration of being a proud African in diverse forms, emphasizing the unity and cultural richness of the continent. In this case, Our AFCON is OUR PRIDE!

The TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), the biggest event on African soil, has long been a source of inspiration, passion, and unity for Africans worldwide. #OurAFCON is a captivating 360-degree campaign that transcends on-ground marketing, digital marketing, social media, infotainment, user-generated content, and more. It's a comprehensive effort to engage with and celebrate the diverse African audience, both on and off the field.

The heart of #OurAFCON lies in its multiple episodic stories, each designed to breathe life into the profound sense of pride that individuals of African descent experience when AFCON takes center stage. These narratives will not only showcase the love for the beautiful game but also delve into how AFCON is a global celebration of African culture in all its vibrant forms, from music to art and beyond.

Through this campaign, all Africans around the world will have the opportunity to share their heartfelt messages with their national teams, expressing their hopes and dreams for their beloved squads. This call to action is a crucial aspect of #OurAFCON, as it empowers every African to be part of the celebration and to contribute to the collective spirit of unity and pride that defines this remarkable competition.

The campaign will highlight inspiring stories of African communities around the globe coming together to cheer their teams, forge new friendships, and embrace their rich cultural roots. #OurAFCON seeks to convey the emotions, exhilaration, and the powerful sense of pride that surges through every African's heart during this thrilling competition.

As the world eagerly anticipates the forthcoming TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations, CAF invites everyone to join us on this captivating journey. Whether you are cheering from the bustling streets of Abidjan or the vibrant neighborhoods across Africa and beyond; #OurAFCON is the platform where your connection to the continent, your passion for football, and your celebration of African culture will shine.

Stay tuned for an unforgettable experience as #OurAFCON launches, sharing the stories that define the unbreakable bond between Africans worldwide and the TotalEnergies CAF Africa Cup of Nations.



Egyptian side, Modern Future narrowly edged SuperSport United of South Africa by a goal thanks to a late Ghanam Mohamed strike to secure a vital win at home their opening TotalEnergies CAF Confederation Cup group match on Sunday.

For the better part of the match, the South Africans held their nerve against the north African side who couldn't break the Gavin Hunt led side.

It was only in the 76th minute that Ghanam Mohamed found the only goal of the match to give his side the hard-fought victory against United.

The victory for Future sets them up for the hard task ahead of them next week when they face Al Hilal Benghazi in Libya.

Meanwhile in another fixture in North Africa, Tunisia's Club Africain cruised past Ghana's Dreams FC with a 2-0 victory at home.

The Tunisians bossed their West African opponents from the opening whistle, with goals by Tayeb Meziani in the 5th minute along with a Kingsley Eduwo strike in the 19th minute to put the match to bed from the onset.

Dreams will have the opportunity to redeem themselves next week in an interesting tie against Nigeria's Rivers United at home, while the Tunisians travel to Angola to face Academica do Lobito.





## **MATCH SCHEDULE**

13 JAN - 11 FEB 2024







## MATCH SCHEDULE

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CAF'	Drag Minima										Mount of 16						Queter-Finals							Sect Finals			SHiftage	Final		
AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS CÔTE D'IVOIRE 23	SATURDAY 13 JAN	SUNDAY 14 JAN	MONDAY 15 JAN	TUESDAY 16 JAN	WEDNESDAY 17 JAN	THURSDAY 18 JAN	FRIDAY 19 JAN	SATURDAY 20 JAN	SUNDAY	MONDAY 22 JAN	TUESDAY 23 JAN	WEDNESDAY 24 JAN	THURSDAY 25 JAN	FRIDAY 26 JAN	SATURDAY 27 JAN	SUNDAY 28 JAN	MONDAY 29 JAN	TUESDAY 30 JAN	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY 02 FEB	SATURDAY 03 FEB	SUNDAY 04 FEB	MONDAY 05 FEB	TUESDAY 06 FEB	WEDNESDAY 07 FEB	THURSDAY 08 FEB	FRIDAY 09 FEB	SATURDAY 10 FEB	SUNDAY
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GROUP A (ADO)

CÔTE D'IVOIRE (CIV)

NIGERIA (NGR)

EQUATORIAL GUINEA (EGG)

EGYPT (EGY)

GHANA (GHA)

CAPE VERDE (CPV)

MOZAMBIQUE (MOZ)

GROUP C (CKB)

SENEGAL (SEN)

CAMEROON (CMR)

GUINEA (GUI)

THE GAMBIA (GAM)

GROUP D (SDP)

ALGERIA (ALG)

BURKINA FASO (BFA)

MAURITANIA (MTN)

ANGOLA (ANG)

GROUP E (AGC)
TURISIA (TURI)
MALI (MLI)
SOUTH AFRICA (RSA)

MOROCCO (MAR)
DR CONGO (RDC)
ZAMBIA (ZAM)
TANZANIA (TAN)

# **AFCON** 2024





### TRAVEL PACKAGES 2024

#### GROUP A

7 NIGHT **PACKAGE** 11-18 JAN 2024 REF 24/21 **4 MATCHES** 

#### GROUP B

7 NIGHT PACKAGE 18-25 JAN 2024 REF 24/22 4 MATCHES

#### **GROUP B+**

14 NIGHT PACKAGE 18 JAN-1 FEB 2024 **REF 24/22** 

6 (4+2) MATCHES

**OPENING GAME 13 JANUARY 2024** 

**GROUP A MATCH 14 JANUARY 2024** 

**GROUP E MATCH 16 JANUARY 2024** 

**GROUP E MATCH 16 JANUARY 2024**  GROUP E MATCH **20 JANUARY 2024** 

**GROUP E MATCH** 21 JANUARY 2024

**GROUP E MATCH 24 JANUARY 2024** 

**GROUP F MATCH 24 JANUARY 2024**  GROUP E MATCH 20 JANUARY 2024 GROUP E MATCH 21 JANUARY 2024 **GROUP E MATCH 24 JANUARY 2024 GROUP F MATCH 24 JANUARY 2024 ROUND OF 16** CHOICE 30 JAN

#### GROUP C

5 NIGHT PACKAGE 8-13 FEB 2024 **REF 24/22 BRONZE & FINAL** 

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# **AFL EXPERIENCE WILL HELP BAFANA IN**

SIHLE NDEBELE JOURNALIST

## **WORLD CUP BID**



#### BENIN TO PUT BAFANA TO TEST IN OPENING QUALIFIER



Bafana Bafana players during the team's training session and press conference at TUKS High Performance Centre on Monday Image: Gallo Images/Lefty Shivambu

Bafana Bafana skipper Ronwen Williams has suggested the experience they, as Mamelodi Sundowns players alongside his deputy Percy Tau of Al Ahly, gained in the recent African Football League (AFL) will help Mzansi a great deal in the World Cup qualifiers.

The inaugural AFL was eventually clinched by Sundowns last Sunday after beating one of the giants of the continent, Wydad Casablanca of Morocco, 3-2 on aggregate, having outshone Tau's Al Ahly's 1-0 on aggregate in the semifinals. Bafana get their World Cup qualifiers campaign under way by welcoming Benin at Moses Mabhida Stadium on Saturday (3pm).

"Obviously we learnt so much playing AFL. It's very tough playing every three or four days... you need to be mentally prepared, especially with the long travelling, so it's just experiences that we've gained over the last few months, alongside Percy as well," Williams said.

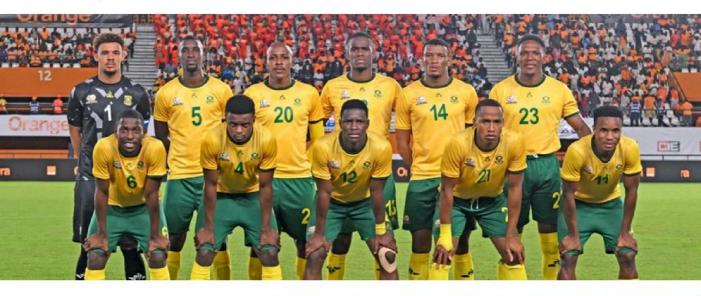
"We share our experiences as we'll be facing a similar challenge when we play home and away, so it's just for us to make sure that we recover well like the coach said."

Following the withdrawal of Grant Kekana and Thapelo Maseko due to injuries, Sundowns now boast six players in the squad; namely Williams, Mothobi Mvala, Aubrey Modiba, Khuliso Mudau, Teboho Mokoena and Themba Zwane.

Apart from Benin, Bafana's other Group C opponents are Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Lesotho. SA's next face Rwanda away on Tuesday (3pm SA time).

Like his coach Hugo Broos has bemoaned that the Sundowns contingent arrived fatigued on the back of a hectic fixture programme, Williams also emphasised the importance of recovery. The Bafana skipper, however, didn't want to make a big deal out of fatigue, saying they are paid to play football, hence they mustn't complain.

"Recovery is going to be key because we've played so many games. We also have to remain hungry... this is our job at the end of the day and we don't have to look for any excuses. Each and everyone gets tired but you get paid to do this job, so it's just to be mentally focused," Williams said.



AMAZULU FC STRIKER BONGINKOSI NTULI HAS DIED AFTER BEING DIAGNOSED WITH AN AGGRESSIVE FORM OF CANCER RECENTLY, THE CLUB SAID. HE WAS 32.

NTULI'S DEATH WAS CONFIRMED ON SUNDAY AFTER HE BECAME ILL AND HAD TO BE HOSPITALISED A FEW WEEKS AGO.





JUST TWO WEEKS AFTER THE DEATH OF AMAZULU STRIKER BONGINKOSI NTULI, THE FOOTBALL FRATERNITY HAS BEEN HIT WITH ANOTHER DEATH.

SUPERSPORT UNITED
GOALKEEPER GEORGE
CHIGOVA PASSED AWAY ON
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON
AND DETAILS OF HIS DEATH
ARE STILL SKETCHY.

# UNBEATEN IN ALMOST 500 DAYS YET TREATED LIKE THE UNWANTED STEPCHILD ... HAS SA FALLEN OUT OF LOVE WITH BAFANA BAFANA? • IOL

When the referee in Bafana Bafana's friendly against the Ivory Coast on Tuesday blew the whistle for full-time, it meant that the South African national team had gone 496 days without losing a game.

The draw against the African powerhouses came after an encouraging performance. Following the dull goalless draw against Eswatini last week, Hugo Broos' men played with purpose on Tuesday, and were unfortunate not to win the game.

Broos was appointed two years ago to improve the national team and results suggest he's done just that. They're back in the <u>Africa Cup of Nations</u> after missing out in 2021, and have climbed up the FIFA rankings. That can only bode well for their bid to qualify for an expanded World Cup in 2026.

But, despite their unbeaten run and impressive form, Bafana have in recent years been the butt of many jokes for South Africans, particularly on social media.

Last week was a huge one for South African sport. The country celebrated when the Proteas were able to win their Cricket World Cup clash against Australia. The champagne was in full flow again on Sunday when Siya Kolisi and his Springboks "united the country" and knocked hosts France out of the Rugby World Cup.



Earlier this year, we all watched as the nation's women's team Banyana Banyana created some history by advancing to the knockout stages of their World Cup.

Last week, Bafana could only manage a goalless draw against lowly Eswatini at an empty FNB Stadium, the home of South African football. The nation, it seems, has fallen out of love with Bafana Bafana.

This was evident in last month's friendly against the Democratic Republic of Congo in Soweto. After that game Broos complained that it felt like an away game as the support for the visiting team outnumbered the local fans.

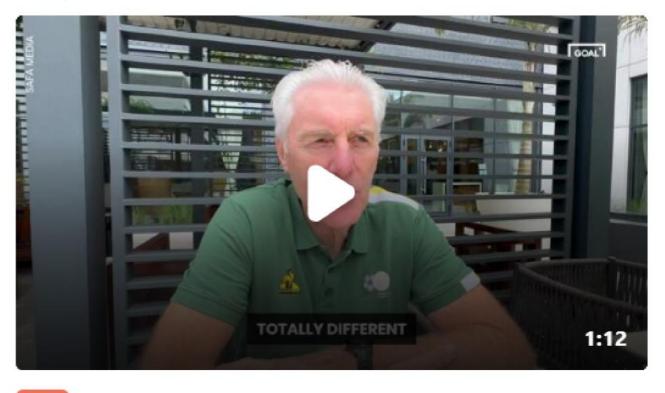
To make matters worse, very few fans would have been able to watch Tuesday's game in the Ivory Coast as the game was not broadcast on television, but rather on the SABC+ app.

But, despite the game not being shown on TV, it didn't look like there was must protestation from fans, some of whom reacted with "Bafana played today?"

The blame can be place on the South African Football Association's door, who don't seem to have an idea how hype up the team.

Compared to other national federations, and even some of out local clubs, SAFA's presence on social media is pitiful, and their website looks like a student's blog from the early 2000. SAFA are not doing enough to sell the game to the fans, and have taken the country for granted. Let's hope that when the Rugby World Cups ends, the higher ups at SAFA will get on the phone with their counterparts at SA Rugby and get some tips on how to make fans fall in love with the team again.

**IOL Sport** 







We look at key talking points including Villa's rise into the top four, Mainoo's midfield magic for Man Utd and Luton's vital victory

Aston Villa are two points off the top of the Premier League table and sit within the top four after 13 matches played for the first time since December 2009.

With a third of the 2023/24 campaign gone Villa, implausibly, are sticking tight to the frontrunners <u>Arsenal</u>, <u>Liverpool</u> and <u>Manchester City</u>. <u>Unai Emery</u> is working miracles, plain and simple.

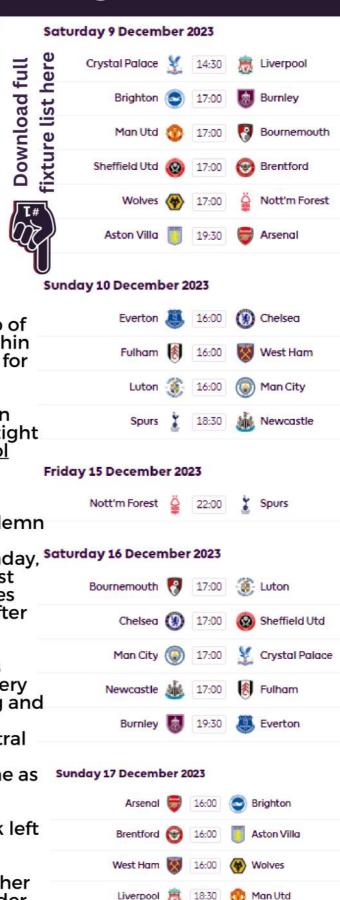
They needed a touch of luck to condemn <u>Tottenham Hotspur</u> to their third consecutive top-flight defeat on Sunday, Saturday 16 December 2023 surviving waves of pressure in the first half in particular, but Emery still takes the plaudits for his smart changes after the break.

Within five minutes of kick-off it was clear he had got this one wrong. Emery started Matty Cash on the right wing and Ezri Konsa at right-back, bringing a shaky-looking <u>Diego Carlos</u> into central defence and instructing <u>Boubacar</u> Kamara not to drop into the back line as Sunday 17 December 2023 he normally does.

This substantial reshuffle at the back left Villa confused.

Having Cash playing on the flank rather than having an extra central midfielder meant Villa had nobody dipping infield to receive the ball from the centre-backs, Thursday 21 December 2023 while Spurs' hard press resulted in Konsa, Carlos and Cash getting stuck, unable to pass through the lines.

Villa's average positions in the first half, shown in the graphic below, captures the problem. Notice how the front is disconnected from the back, and see the ring of space around Villa's two central midfielders.



Liverpool 📆 18:30 🔞 Man Utd

Crystal Palace 12:00 Brighton

#### Friday 22 December 2023

Aston Villa 22:00 Sheffield Utd

Visit www.championarising.co.za for links to EPL Soccer





Jostas Tsimikas hailed Trent Alexander-Arnold's match-saving calmness after Liverpool's 1-1 draw with Manchester City on Saturday. Alexander-Arnold struck an 80th-minute equaliser to ensure Jürgen Klopp's side left Etihad Stadium with a hard-earned point against the reigning Premier League champions, who had led through Erling Haaland's first-half goal in Manchester.

And speaking to Liverpoolfc.com afterwards, Tsimikas saluted the impressiveness of his vice-captain's key contribution under pressure.

"Of course he is confident, we are Scousers you know!" said the Greece international. "I can't imagine how calm he was because if that was me, I couldn't stay calm!

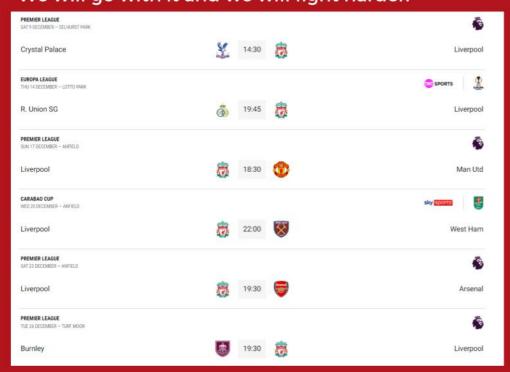
"The player he is, you can't describe it. Everybody in the football world knows. It was a very good goal, very important and I am very happy for him and for the team."

In fighting back for the draw, Liverpool became the first team to stop City from winning at their home in 2023, a run that had reached 23 games.

"Yes, it is a very difficult place to come against one of the best teams in the world," Tsimikas said.

"[It is] a very tough place to come and play football, but at the end the only thing that matters in football is the three points.

"At the end we get one, we will deal with it and we will go with the same hunger, because I think it's too early to talk about a title race. "We will go with it and we will fight harder."

















# SUTTON SCHOOL ENJOYS SPECIAL SURPRISE

Last Thursday morning, a group of students from Harris Academy Sutton believed they were on their way to a careers event.

However, much to their surprise, Jake Ricketts, Joseph Simms, Joshua Claughton and Stanley Ball arrived at Chelsea's training ground in Cobham for a special visit courtesy of Chelsea Foundation.

The four astonished boys, who have been through difficult times recently, were invited into the training ground as part of Chelsea Foundation's latest community day.

Foundation community day November 2023 e

The students met Chelsea legend Carlo Cudicini and took part in a Q&A with the former goalkeeper and Chelsea TV's Lee Parker, before heading out to the training pitch.

After watching the squad in action, the boys met with the players and staff who signed memorabilia for the students.

Joseph said: 'I was very impressed with the quality of training and it was brilliant to see the players in action. I'm a huge Chelsea fan and my favourite player is Cole Palmer, so it was fantastic to meet him and all of the squad. I got my Chelsea shirt signed and will be wearing it to school!'

Jake said: 'I used to play for Chelsea Foundation's pan-disability team when I was younger, so I was very surprised to be back here at the training ground. I loved meeting Nicolas Jackson, I think he's great.'

Joshua said: 'I can't believe I met Raheem Sterling.'

Stanley added: 'Today was a complete surprise, I thought we were going to a careers day, but couldn't believe it when we arrived at Chelsea's training ground. It's been a great day and much better than being at school!'



## Mikel Arteta couldn't have asked for much more from his 200th game in charge of the club.

The boss brought up his milestone in fine fashion, earning a three points, a clean sheet and going to the top of the Premier League table.

"Today was a special day for me, for the staff, 200 games for this incredible club," he said. "I'm really going to remember this day for a lot of reasons but especially for the chemistry that the team shows between them. You know how sensitive we are with the emotional state of each of them. The relationship that we have with our supporters and obviously the fact that we won the game and we are top of the league.

"I am so happy, I'm going to have a beautiful dinner with my family and tomorrow start to think about the next Champions League game."

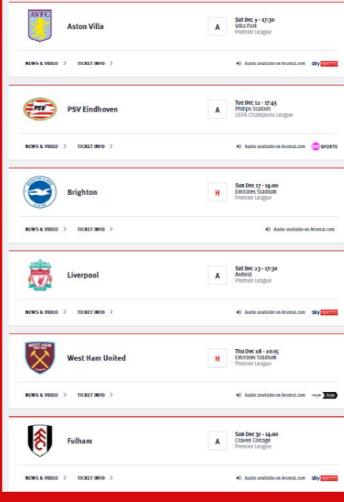
But his team had to work hard for the three points at the Gtech Community Stadium, finally getting the breakthrough late on.

"We knew that was going to be the case," he said. "I'm so happy how much the team wants it, how prepared they were. We knew we were coming to a really tough place today after having the opportunity to go top. And the team showed an incredible mentality, the way they competed, the way they play, and we fully deserved to win the game."

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The debate has been alive and overhead-kicking since the ball hit the back of Everton's net. Was Alejandro Garnacho's stunning third-minute strike for Manchester United even better than Wayne Rooney's Goal of the Decade (2010-19) poll-topper against Manchester City?

Here, two club journalists state the case for each effort but we also want to know what you think, so please scroll to the poll below their respective arguments.

### WAYNE ROONEY v MANCHESTER CITY Adam Marshall

Most people acknowledge that Rooney's jaw-dropping overhead kick is United's best Premier League goal since the competition's inception in 1992. Watching from the Stretford End that day, it just felt like a seismic moment as it happened.

Context here was everything. Wayne had wanted to leave earlier in the 2010/11 season and this was some way to put all that behind him. Furthermore, those neighbours were just getting noisier and, with their financial backing, it was just a matter of time. City were always going to emerge as serious contenders for the major prizes.

The Blues had got back on level terms in the derby and, after we'd just lost against Wolves, the momentum could have really shifted in terms of winning the league. It was a moment of pure inspiration, one that slammed the door on these thoughts and sparked wild scenes. I was at the other end of the ground and it was hard to comprehend just how amazing the strike was that I'd just witnessed. I think I potentially injured the fan next to me as the whole ground erupted in celebration.

This was classic United, classic Rooney. Coming up trumps when at the point of maximum pressure and producing a piece of magic that will be forever replayed. A goal of gigantic proportions and the background to it puts it ahead of Garnacho's glorious strike, in my

SPLIT SCREEN: GARNACHO V ROONEY

view.

#### ALEJANDRO GARNACHO v EVERTON Adam Bostock

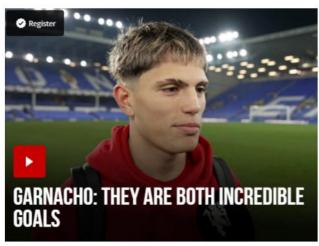
Garnacho's goal had its context too. United were heading into a cauldron at Goodison Park, where the home supporters were expected to bring even more fire and brimstone than usual for a visit from the red half of Manchester.

The atmosphere for this fixture has been laced with some animosity since the summer of 2004, when the Merseysiders' prodigal son Wayne Rooney was lost to Old Trafford, snapped up by Sir Alex Ferguson in a sensational transfer deal. But this time, the Everton fans' anger wasn't aimed at their visitors from the other end of the M62; instead, their wrath was directed at the Premier League, for finding their club had breached financial rules and imposing a 10-point penalty that took them back into the relegation places they had strived so hard to escape under their firebrand boss Sean Dyche.

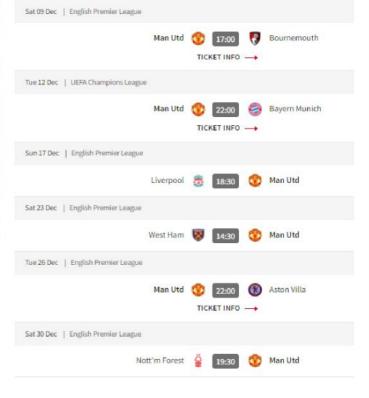
How would the volatile conditions around the perimeter of the pitch impact the action on it? Did a United team that had already suffered four away defeats this season have the mettle to compete against an aggrieved and extra-motivated home team with a point - or 10 - to prove? We had our answer within three minutes of the kick-off. And it was provided by the second-youngest player in Erik ten Hag's starting line-up. Youth. Courage. Success.

It would have taken a brave attendee to turn and point out to the already angry Everton fans around them that Alejandro's acrobatic leap to despatch Diogo Dalot's cross reminded them of Rooney in his prime. But the similarities with the latter's famous derby strike were undeniably uncanny - both were breathtaking overhead kicks, scored from roughly the same part of the penalty area, at the expense of an England goalkeeper (Joe Hart, Jordan Pickford).

Garnacho's connection was cleaner, the technique more textbook and, executed in a tumultuous setting away from the home comforts of Old Trafford, it had an odds-defying dimension to it. Those are the reasons why Alejandro's cauldron-quelling effort edges it for me.











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#### F C Bayern

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#### **Everton**

Sat 09 March 2024 Kick off : TBC



#### **Liverpool FC**

Sat 06 April 2024 Kick off : TBC



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Sat 20 April 2024 Kick off : TBC



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# MANCHESTER CITY UNVEIL STATUE CELEBRATING LEGENDARY TRIUMVIRATE

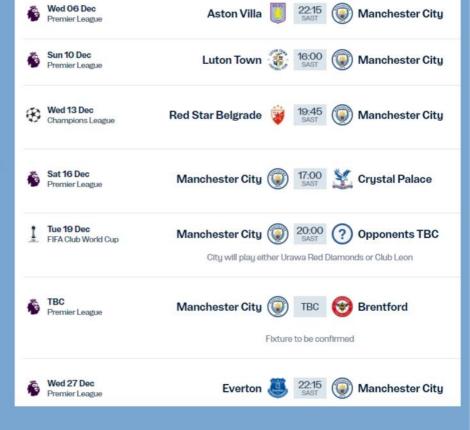


Manchester City Football Club has unveiled a permanent tribute to legendary trio Colin Bell, Francis Lee, and Mike Summerbee outside the Etihad Stadium, commemorating their combined 30 years of football service to the Club.

Celebrating Manchester City's success of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the bronze artwork of the men on a single plinth captures three of the most popular players in the Club's history in dynamic poses that are characteristic of their styles of play.

In a further celebration of the era in which City famously won the First Division title, the FA Cup, the League Cup and a European Cup Winners' Cup, the names of all 29 players who contributed to this trophy-winning period are inscribed on a bronze plate that sits atop the statue's plinth.







We are extremely saddened to learn of the passing of Terry Venables, our former player, manager and chief executive, who passed away on Saturday. He was 80.

An FA Cup winner at Spurs as a player (1967) and manager (1991), Terry joined us from Chelsea in 1966 and made 141 appearances for us in all competitions, scoring nine goals, until departing for QPR in 1969.

However, it's as a manager he'll be most remembered. Taking his first steps into coaching at Crystal Palace in 1975/76, Terry succeeded Malcolm Allison as manager in 1976, returned to QPR in 1980 and was then appointed by Barcelona, where 'El Tel' won La Liga in 1985 and the Copa de la Liga in 1986. He also led Barcelona to the European Cup Final in 1986, but lost out to Steaua Bucharest.

Terry returned 'home' to White Hart Lane as manager in 1987 and built a team around the likes of goalkeeper Erik Thorstvedt, skipper Gary Mabbutt, genial midfielder Paul Gascoigne and England great Gary Lineker that finished third in the old First Division in 1989/90 before winning the FA Cup in 1991.

Terry Venables was part of our 1967 FA Cup winning side

Terry took over as England manager in 1994 and led the national team to the semi-finals of Euro 96 - famously beating the Netherlands 4-1 at Wembley but agonisingly losing out on penalties to Germany in the semi-final. He later managed Australia, Palace again, Middlesbrough and Leeds United.

A Spurs fan growing up, Terry was born in Dagenham, east London, and played for England Schoolboys in 1958 before signing as a Chelsea amateur later that year. He made his Football League debut aged 17 on 6 February, 1960 against West Ham and soon gained England youth and amateur honours.

A member of Chelsea's 1960 FA Youth Cup winning side, he joined their professional ranks in August, 1960 and retained the Youth Cup at the end of the season. He added Under-23 and full England caps to his tally during 1963 and 1964 and was part of Chelsea's League Cup success in 1965/66.

Terry signed for us on 9 May, 1966 and made his Spurs debut at Blackburn that same day. Twelve months later, he found himself facing his former team-mates in the first all-London FA Cup Final. He moved to QPR in June, 1969 and ended his playing career with Crystal Palace during 1974/75 before embarking on a lengthy career in coaching and management.

He steered Palace from the Third Division to the First Division in just four years, before revisiting QPR, guiding them to the FA Cup Final in 1982 - where they lost after a replay to Spurs, as we retained the trophy - and promotion to the First Division a year later. In 1984, La Liga giants Barcelona lured Venables to the Nou Camp and he led them to the Spanish title in his first season and the European Cup Final in 1986, only to lose on penalties to Romania side Steaua Bucharest.

Terry overcame a tough time initially after returning to Spurs as manager but with that England international spine of Mabbutt, Gazza and Lineker together, finished third in 1989/90 and then memorably lifted the FA Cup in 1991, beating Arsenal in the semi-final - preventing the Gunners winning the double - before overcoming the odds on the day to topple Forest at Wembley.

After Spurs, Venables enjoyed possibly his finest moment as a coach by leading an attractive England side to the semi-finals of Euro 96 before that agonising loss against Germany. After spells in the dugout with Australia, Palace again, Middlesbrough and Leeds United, his last senior coaching was back with the Three Lions as assistant to Steve McLaren from 2006-2007.

We extend our sincere condolences at this sad time to Terry's wife, Yvette, his close family and friends.

In tribute, we shall hold a minute's applause prior to kick-off and our players will wear black armbands during this afternoon's Premier League fixture against Aston Villa.





Tottenham Hotspur partners with Fanblock on new digital gaming platform | Tottenham Hotspur Tottenham Hotspur has partnered with Fanblock - the digital gaming platform - to offer a unique opportunity for its global fanbase to interact with the Club's matches like never before.

Tottenham Hotspur has partnered with Fanblock - the digital gaming platform - to offer a unique opportunity for its global fanbase to interact with the Club's matches like never before.

Fans can now own virtual blocks of Spurs' digital football pitch and earn points through the real-life action that occurs in the corresponding areas during live matches.

Points earned through moments such as passes, headers, free kicks, corner kicks, tackles, goals and assists then give fans the opportunity to win prizes such as VIP premium tickets, private stadium tours, signed jerseys, pennants and balls, pitchside visits and much more.

Fanblocks are stored on the Polygon blockchain and are active for the season - after which, they will belong to fans as digital collectibles. They are released in limited editions depending on their rarity and position on the field and can be purchased in packs of four or ten using any major debit or credit card.

Tottenham Hotspur is the first English Premier League team to embrace the revolutionary Fanblock technology - which will go live for the first time for Sunday's home Premier League clash against Newcastle United.

"We are proud to enter the English Premier League with Spurs, a club with such a rich history. Fanblock is all about the fans of the future and with the incredible Tottenham Hotspur Stadium we are building a rewarding new way for fans to enjoy the beautiful game and support the Spurs" Fanblock Founder and CEO Johan Greeff said.

Ryan Norys, Commercial Sales Director, Tottenham Hotspur, said: "Our partnership with Fanblock is another example of how we are embracing the latest technology to create new forms of fan engagement and opportunities for supporters to get closer to the Club no matter where they are in the world."



# **England Premier League Soccer**

# **NEWCASTLE UNITED LAUNCHES FAN ADVISORY BOARD**

Newcastle United has officially launched its Fan Advisory Board (FAB) as part of the club's ongoing commitment to supporter engagement.

The FAB is part of the club's wider Fan Engagement Plan announced in August 2023, and will be a conduit for two-way dialogue between supporters and the club's key decision makers.

The newly-formed board is expected to meet for the first time in February 2024 and will facilitate the exchange of ideas and feedback on a formal basis.

Who will be on the FAB?

"WE ARE COMMITTED TO COLLABORATIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE AND CONSISTENT ENGAGEMENT WITH SUPPORTERS, WHEREVER THEY MAY BE, ENSURING FANS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO INFORM THE CLUB'S DECISION-MAKING AT ALL LEVELS."

# **FAN ENGAGEMENT STATEMENT**

The FAB will consist of nine supporter representatives. While the group will not have formal club representatives as members, it will meet with club officials three times per season, with the club's CEO attending at least one meeting.

Of nine fan positions, four will be 'co-opted' for representatives of established supporter groups, with two seats for Newcastle United Supporters Trust (NUST), one for Newcastle United Disabled Supporters Association (NUDSA) and one seat for United With Pride (UWP).

Three positions will be for individuals who meet required criteria, namely one member, one supporter aged under 25 and one fan residing outside of the UK.

Two further positions will be open to supporters who are season ticket holders or members, however applicants must meet the eligibility criteria detailed in the FAB Terms of Reference.

Each co-opted representative will have a three-year tenure, while all other positions will have two-year tenures.



English top-flight soccer club Newcastle United plan to expand the capacity of their St James' Park stadium to around 65,000 seats, according to The Telegraph.

- Newcastle have already begun a feasibility study on how to develop the Gallowgate End and East Stand
- Club figuring out what sort of capacity increase will be possible if both stands are extended, though it is estimated the eventual capacity could rise to around 65,000
- Preference is to make the East Stand and Gallowgate End similar in size to the Leazes End and Milburn Stand, which would give the stadium more of a bowl-shape appearance
- Work is more likely to start on the East Stand first, including using glass so residents still have their right to natural light, though no timescale or start date has been given
- Work is at an early stage and Newcastle are waiting to hear back from architects about what building work will be possible and how much it will cost

# Context:

With a capacity of a little over 52,000, Newcastle have the seventh-largest stadium in the Premier League but, having last added seating in 2000, they have fallen behind the likes of Manchester City, Tottenham Hotspur and West Ham United. Should the Magpies increase St James' Park seating to 65,000, it would give the club the second-largest stadium in the top flight behind Manchester United's Old Trafford.

Though the cost is unlikely to be a concern for Newcastle, which are majority owned by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF), the Telegraph notes that the proposed building work is complicated by the fact the East Stand has listed buildings directly behind it and there is little chance of being able to demolish Leazes Terrace or any of the Georgian terraced houses that people live in.



# THREE-TIME WINNERS GERMANY WILL STAGE THE UEFA EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP IN 2024.



The UEFA EURO 2024 trophy on stage at the final tournament draw
UEFA via Getty Images

# EURO2024 GERMANY

# Where will EURO 2024 be held?

Germany will host EURO 2024, having been chosen to stage the 17th edition of the UEFA European Championship at a UEFA Executive Committee meeting in Nyon on 27 September 2018. Türkiye was the only other nation that bid to hold UEFA EURO 2024. West Germany hosted the 1988 edition, but this will be the first time Germany has staged the UEFA European Championship since reunification. The 2006 FIFA World Cup also took place in the country.



### When is EURO 2024?

The UEFA EURO 2024 final tournament is scheduled to take place from 14 June to 14 July 2024.

As the host nation, Germany are seeded in Group A and will occupy position A1; they will therefore play in the opening match at the Munich Football Arena on Friday 14 June. Germany/West Germany have featured at every EURO since 1972. West Germany won the 1972 and 1980 editions, while the reunited Germany triumphed at EURO '96.

# Who has qualified for EURO?

The draw for the final tournament was held in Hamburg on Saturday 2 December.

Group A: Germany, Scotland, Hungary, Switzerland

Group B: Spain, Croatia, Italy, Albania

Group C: Slovenia, Denmark, Serbia, England

Group D: Play-off winner A, Netherlands, Austria, France Group E: Belgium, Slovakia, Romania, Play-off winner B Group F: Türkiye, Play-off winner C, Portugal, Czechia

The last three final tournament spots are determined via the play-offs, scheduled for March 2024.

## What is the tournament format?

The format will be the same as for UEFA EURO 2020. The top two in each of the six final tournament groups will proceed to the round of 16 along with the four best third-placed finishers.

# Where and when will the final of UEFA EURO 2024 be played?

Berlin's Olympiastadion will stage the final on Sunday 14 July 2024.

# What are the EURO 2024 host cities?

The ten venues chosen to host games at the tournament include nine of the stadiums used at the 2006 World Cup plus the Düsseldorf Arena.

Uniquely, the Munich Football Arena will be staging matches for the second EURO in succession; Bayern München's home ground was one of 11 arenas that hosted games at UEFA EURO 2020.

### Host venues are as follows:

Berlin: Olympiastadion Berlin (current capacity: 70,000)

Cologne: Cologne Stadium (47,000)

Dortmund: BVB Stadion Dortmund (66,000)



# When do EURO 2024 tickets go on sale?

Following the conclusion of the successful general public application window, which saw applications for over 20 million tickets, UEFA has announced details of the second sales phase for EURO 2024.

Following the final tournament draw, another sales phase will start for the fans of the 20 qualified teams, as well as hosts Germany. This sales phase will not start at the same time, but according to the schedule defined by each participating national association (PNA).

Tickets will also be held back for sale to supporters of the national teams that qualify through the UEFA EURO 2024 play-offs, scheduled for 21 March and 26 March 2024.

# **EURO 2024 key dates**

# Qualifying

21 March 2024: play-off semi-finals 26 March 2024: play-off finals

# **Final tournament**

14 June 2024: UEFA EURO 2024 opening game, Munich Football Arena 14 July 2024: UEFA EURO 2024 final, Olympiastadion Berlin

# Who are the city ambassadors for EURO 2024?

- Berlin: Kevin-Prince Boateng
- Cologne: Harald Schumacher
- Dortmund: Roman Weidenfeller, Annike Krahn
- Düsseldorf: Martina Voss-Tecklenburg, Sandra Mikolaschek, Selin Oruz
- Frankfurt: Alex Meier, Deborah Levi
- · Gelsenkirchen: Gerald Asamoah
- Hamburg: Patrick Esume
- Leipzig: Professor Dr Jörg Junhold, Anja Mittag, Jürgen Zielinski
- Munich: Dr Felix Brych
- Stuttgart: Cacau, Niko Kappel, Eli Seitz







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There are familiar comforts in Dubai for the Springbok Sevens team, with the knowledge that a good track record and some passionate support await them at The Sevens Stadium on Saturday and Sunday.

Despite that, the Blitzboks will not take anything for granted. In fact, it is quite the opposite according to experienced forward Impi Visser, who said they are eager to right the wrongs of last season's HSBC SVNS.

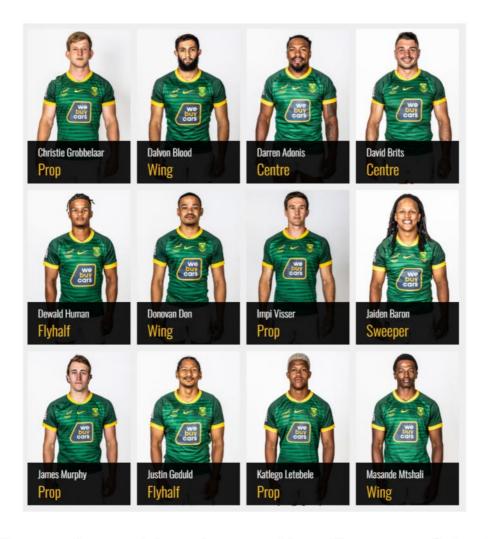
The Blitzboks started off with a great tournament win in Dubai, but did not meet their standards for the remainder of the series, neither that of their supporters, with only 12 wins in their last 30 outings.

That hurt was part of the determination and drive towards a better 2024 season, according to Visser.

"For our squad, Dubai has good memories," Visser, who will be playing in his 33rd tournament, said on Wednesday.

"This will be my seventh appearance at the tournament, first with the Sevens Academy and later as a Blitzbok player on the World Series, with a couple of wins included.





"Many of us made our debuts here and handing out training jerseys to our two uncapped players, Quewin Nortje and Katlego Letebele, at training today, reminded many of us how special this jersey and journey is.

"And that we did not always do the jersey proud last season. That hurt and will make us determined to use this opportunity to rectify that."

The road to redemption started a couple of months ago with their pre-season, where they worked very hard and stayed focussed on the task at hand: "Yes, the hard work was done, and we did push ourselves very hard. Now that is done, we get the chance to play, and we are eager to do so."

On the other side of the experience spectrum, Masande Mtshali, is keen to use every opportunity to grow and contribute. The 20-year-old, who also played for the Junior Springboks in the World Rugby U20 Championships earlier this season, hopes to take the learnings from last year's five tournament appearances, combined with the hard work done at training, into the new season.

"Dubai is a good place to start with that," said Mtshali.

"I have been here before and we feel comfortable with the surroundings and tournament set-up, so there will be no excuses. We really trained hard to prepare ourselves the best possible way for the tournament. I feel ready to contribute in a positive and constructive way and to go and make the country proud alongside the rest of the Blitzboks."

The Springbok Sevens squad takes on Samoa, Canada and New Zealand in Pool A of the tournament.

# ONE SPRINGBOKS STAR RE-SIGNS, ONE SET TO DEPART AS MUNSTER END SPECULATION

**JARED WRIGHT** 



Munster have announced that Rugby World Cup winner, Jean Kleyn, has inked a new contract with the province but his Springboks teammate, RG Snyman, is set to leave.

There had been plenty of speculation over the future of the quality duo after Kleyn was selected for his country of birth, South Africa, ahead of this year's global tournament.

That meant it was expected that Munster would lose one of Kleyn or Snyman from the 2024/25 campaign in order to reduce their non Irish-qualified personnel for next term.

Snyman will be that player, as he will take up a new playing opportunity at the end of the current campaign, but his fellow Springboks second-row has re-signed with Munster.

There was also further positive news to report on the contract front as openside flanker John Hodnett has penned a new contract with the United Rugby Championship outfit.

Hodnett was the hero in the final against the Stormers as he crossed for what turned out to be the game-winning try that sealed them a thrilling 19-14 win in Cape Town.

He joins Kleyn in inking a two-year extension while Liam Coombes has signed a one-year contract, with the wing/centre having scored six tries in 19 appearances so far.

The big news though for Munster fans will be the deal for Kleyn, who was recently named Men's Player of the Year for 2022/23 at the province after a stellar season.

The hard-working lock returned to URC action last weekend against Leinster and has played 137 games for Munster since making his debut against the Scarlets in 2016.

Last year was a superb campaign from Kleyn as he made 24 starts, more than anyone else in the Munster squad, including 19 in-a-row to end the memorable season in style.

Both he and Hodnett were vital men in the title success as the latter scored three tries in 20 appearances last season, including that match-winner in Cape Town on May 27.

Snyman was another crucial player during the latter stages of the season as his return to action from injury in the red jersey helped him secure selection for the Springboks.

That resulted in the lock featuring in their successful Rugby World Cup campaign, but he has since been sidelined after having to undergo surgery on a chest/shoulder issue

# RUGBY WORLD CUP-WINNING SPRINGBOKS LOCK ON THE RADAR FOR MULTIPLE SOUTH AFRICAN CLUBS JARED WRIGHT

Double Rugby World Cup-winning lock RG Snyman is in line for a possible return to South Africa with his Munster contract up at the end of the season.

Snyman joined Munster in the summer of 2020 but has struggled with injuries throughout his spell at the Irish province and is set to depart the side when his contract comes to an end at the conclusion of the 2023/24 season.

His injury woes have not subsided either, having sustained a pectoral muscle injury in the World Cup final victory over New Zealand that will keep him on the sidelines for four to six months.



# Clubs line up to sign RG Snyman

With Snyman set to depart Munster, several clubs will be eager to secure his services despite his recent injury record.

According to a report by Afrikaans newspaper, Rapport, more than one of South Africa's United Rugby Championship teams have entered the race to sign the giant lock.

The publication did not specify which of the franchises were interested, just that they are 'scrambling with overseas teams to sign the 28-year-old.'

The Sharks, who are backed by US investors, would likely be one of those sides, despite having a plethora of Springboks on their books already.

The Bulls would also likely be eager to welcome back the lock, who was schooled in Pretoria and represented the side through youth and senior levels.

The Stormers and Western Province are still under SA Rugby's administrative control, but having secured private equity from The Red Disa consortium, they could fund the signing of Snyman, particularly after lock Marvin Orie departed for Perpignan after the World Cup.

However, the South African sides will need to fight off the interest from European and Japanese clubs. Snyman has had several stints in Japan with Honda Heat and could return to the land of the rising sun, while multiple French Top 14 clubs will certainly be interested, too.

# Jean Kleyn and Snyman to depart Munster

As for Munster, they look set to lose both Snyman and Jean Kleyn at the end of the season.

When Kleyn made his Springbok debut earlier this year, he was no longer eligible for Ireland, and the chances of the side retaining both World Cup winners beyond next season was always going to be highly unlikely.

Munster head coach Graham Rowntree confirmed that they are in talks over a contract extension with Kleyn - who is courting interest from Top 14 club Lyon - but added that it was going to be a challenge to keep him.

"He knew, we knew, all parties knew, that it was going to be challenging keeping a hold on him, but those contract negotiations are ongoing, and I can't really comment any more on them," Rowntree said.



# NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTH AFRICA ARE IN TALKS TO REVIVE OLD-SCHOOL ALL BLACKS-SPRINGBOKS TOURS DURING THE RUGBY CHAMPIONSHIP.

The move comes after South African franchises left the Super Rugby competition to head north with the creation of the United Rugby Championship.

**Traditional All Blacks and Springboks tours** 

The All Blacks and Wallabies' performances on the international stage have dipped since South Africa's departure, with All Blacks assistant coach Jason Ryan conceding that the loss of the South African sides has impacted the All Blacks' forward play.

To offset this, SA Rugby and NZ Rugby have been in talks over a return to more of a traditional touring schedule during the Rugby Championship, which could see the Springboks face Super Rugby sides and the All Blacks take on South African URC sides.

"We are working with New Zealand on something exciting that we will announce in the next few months," SA Rugby president Mark Alexander told the Rapport in early September.

"If the global season becomes a reality, it will help because we will then see all the national teams playing at the same time."

Since then, NZ Rugby chief executive Mark Robinson has commented on the report and confirmed to Stuff.co.nz that the two nations are in talks. "That's certainly part of the conversation at the moment, [for it] to be a more, you know, more traditional type of tour, but again, there's a lot of work to be done there." Robinson told Stuff.

"We've been open with all the SANZAAR parties that that's something that we're having a look at, and how we can consider that sort of format for the future.

"So, it's early days, but obviously, with the reduction in time we have in playing against South Africa in Super [Rugby], I think there would be real interest in it.

"Clearly, there is interest in it from both unions, but it's very early days around those conversations."

The one stumbling block would be the Rugby Championship moving to the same international window as the Six Nations.

SA Rugby have been in favour of the move, with the Bulls, Lions, Sharks and Stormers competing in the URC and EPCR competitions.

Jaguares set for Super Rugby return Meanwhile, Argentina rugby president Gabriel Travelaglini has revealed that the Jaguares could return to Super Rugby.

The team competed in the tournament between 2016 and 2020, but like the South African franchises, the Jaguares withdrew from the competition during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In an interview with Argentine publication La Nacion, Travelaglini said that they have been invited back into the tournament from 2026, with the current broadcasting rights in New Zealand and Australia expiring in 2025.

"We have the invitation, but it would be from 2026 because they have already closed the current one," Travelaglini said.

"It is planned to set up a franchise. We have the commitment that they will receive us and that we will play games at home and away."







# CHRIS ROBSHAW PICKS HIS GB SEVENS DREAM TEAM AND IT'S FILLED WITH CROSSOVER STARS







For fans of rugby in Paris, the World Cup might be over, but the end of July next year sees the start of the Olympic Games with the Sevens tournament held on the same turf that saw France crash out of their own competition to South Africa at the quarter-final stage.

The big news in the sport is that superstar scrum-half Antoine Dupont is the first of a host of French stars to have taken a sabbatical to go and have a second shot at winning gold at the Stade de France, but this time in the short format of the sport.

Rumours suggest that Louis Bielle-Biarrey and Damian Penaud are also considering a short-term switch to enhance the French chances, with a couple of other big names expected to follow suit.

# A great challenge to your skill-set

Former England skipper <u>Chris Robshaw</u> is a big fan of the contrasting demands that Sevens places upon players and is all for seeing some crossover in terms of the star names taking part.

"It's a great challenge to your skill-sets and it's also a lot of fun," he told Planet Rugby.

"The demands of the 15-a-side game and the 7-a-side version are completely different and in order to compete at international level there's definitely a difference in the approach you'd take in your training. Sevens is all about that sharp pace game, building your fast twitch muscle fibres over and above your long-term stamina for 80 minutes.

"We used to use the short form as a gateway to enhance skills for the longer game as part of our development and I believe it really paid dividends in teaching you how to attack space at pace, how to develop quick hands for passing and also, importantly, how to effectively defend one-on-one situations," Robshaw explained.

"Players like Lawrence Dallaglio, Mathew Tait, Tom Varndell and Josh Lewsey all benefitted hugely from time in this version of the sport, with 'Lol' becoming the only double world champion in both formats. "Regarding Dupont - he'll be absolutely brilliant in this tournament. It's made for his skill-set and also gives him a chance to recover from his various injury issues.

"Without wanting to throw shade at any of the current Sevens specialists, I'd love to see a team of regular Test players created. Given that I appear to be chairman of my own selections, I've picked the ten, including three replacements, I'd want to see in my dream team.

# **Chris Robshaw's Sevens Dream Team**

- 1. Hamish Watson: Gritty, great ball skills and one of those guys who'd adapt well to the space of Sevens. He also punches hugely above his weight in contact and he'd be an ideal prop.
- 2. Ben Earl: Similar to Watson, but possibly more gas, Earl's natural ball handling would see him adapt to the hooker role.
- 3. Duhan van der Merwe: At some 18 stones, Van der Merwe is as heavy as most Test front-rowers but with ball in hand, he's devastating!



**Hamish Watson** 







South African now public enemy No 1: Duhan van der Merwe

- 4. Raffi Quirke: Straightline gas, but also the ability to use his kicking skills to unlock chances for his backs.
- 5. Marcus Smith: Made for the game. More steps that Fred Astaire!
- 6. Joe Marchant: Marchant's ability to nail one-on-one tackles is peerless, and his pace with ball in hand and getting onto kicks is spectacular.
- 7. Louis Rees-Zammit: Quickest runner in Britain why wouldn't you want him in!?

# Replacements:

- 8. Josh Adams: Adams has that rounded skill-set but also the power to be my reserve prop not that he'll thank me for branding him as one of the front-row, even for Sevens!
- 9. Rhys Webb: Blistering acceleration and sometimes we confuse pace with this quality. I've been on the end of some of Webb's runs and his ability to get to full speed is remarkable.
- 10. Darcy Graham: He showed us in the World Cup just how elusive he is, but key to that is his willingness to go and get onto passes, crucial in the Sevens arena.

"So there's my side - some real guile and pace there, but crucially, all of the players I've picked defend width really well. I don't know how the GB Sevens Team will be selected, but I do hope that we see some of the longer form players at least looked at.

"The short form does wonders for skills and spatial awareness and the 15-a-side game can only benefit from those guys bringing their learning back into the domestic and also international game."

# SA RUGBY REVEAL EXCITING 2024 SPRINGBOK HOME TEST SCHEDULE

Old foes New Zealand, presently ranked number three in the world, are back for Tests in Johannesburg and Cape Town



SA Rugby has revealed the 2024 Springbok home Test schedule which includes visits by Ireland, New Zealand and Argentina.

Old foes New Zealand, presently ranked number three in the world, are back for Tests in Johannesburg and Cape Town, while the burgeoning rivalry with second ranked Ireland will spark the season to life in Pretoria and Durban.

The Boks' July Test schedule will conclude with a clash against emerging nation Portugal.

It will be the first time South Africa take on Os Lobos (the Wolves) in an international match, with the venue set to be confirmed.

Rugby fans will also be able to enjoy a reprise of the 2022 Mbombela Test-week experience when Argentina make a return to the Lowveld for the first time in eight years to conclude the Rugby Championship in September.

The Springboks re-emerge from what will have been a 252-day pause between matches between the two sides when they take on Ireland at Loftus Versfeld in Pretoria on July 6.

- The Springboks' home Test schedule for 2024:
- Saturday, 6 July: SA v Ireland (Loftus Versfeld, Pretoria)
- Saturday, 13 July: SA v Ireland (Hollywoodbets Kings Park, Durban)
- Saturday, 20 July: SA v Portugal (venue TBC)
- Saturday, 31 August: SA v New Zealand (Emirates Airline Park, Johannesburg)
- Saturday, 7 September: SA v New Zealand (DHL Stadium, Cape Town)
- Saturday, 28 September: SA v Argentina (Mbombela Stadium, Nelspruit)





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# WILD HORIZONS

AFRICA'S GREATEST ADVENTURES





# FACTS AND STATS: VERSTAPPEN BECOMES FIRST DRIVER IN HISTORY TO LEAD 1,000 LAPS IN A SEASON



Anyone thinking Max Verstappen was going to lift off the gas at the season finale in Abu Dhabi was left sorely disappointed. Instead the world champion dominated proceedings to end a record-breaking year with - suitably enough - yet more records...

- Verstappen won in Abu Dhabi for the fourth year in a row he had never previously won four consecutive races at the same track.
- Verstappen's 54th career win means he surpasses Sebastian Vettel for third on the all-time win list, behind only Michael Schumacher's 91 and Lewis Hamilton's 103.
- Verstappen ends the year with records for the most single-season wins (19), most consecutive race wins (10), most podium finishes (21), highest points total (575) and largest championship-winning margin (290).
- Verstappen's 11th hat-trick weekend (win, pole position and fastest lap) ties him with Jim Clark, with only Hamilton (19) and Schumacher (22) on more.
- Verstappen today became the first driver in history to surpass 1,000 laps led in a single season.



ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - NOVEMBER 26: Charles Leclerc of Monaco driving the (16) Ferrari

Another second place means Charles Leclerc ends the season without a win

- Verstappen's 1,003 laps led this season exactly equals the total led by McLaren in their 1988 season with Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna.
- Verstappen was the only driver to complete every racing lap in the 2023 season.
- Red Bull will begin the 2024 season only one win behind Williams (113-114) for fourth on the all-time win list.

Emotional' Verstappen praises Red Bull for 'incredible season' after scoring 19th win of the year in Abu Dhabi

- Charles Leclerc finished second behind Verstappen in Abu Dhabi for the second consecutive year.
- · Leclerc is now winless in three of his last four seasons with Ferrari.
- George Russell took his second podium finish of the season (both third places).
- Russell's result helped Mercedes clinch second in the constructors' championship by three points over Ferrari.
- Sergio Perez was classified in P4 for Red Bull after he lost positions following the chequered flag because of a five-second time penalty (he also lost positions on the final lap of the previous two races).





'ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - NOVEMBER 26: 8th placed Yuki Tsunoda of Japan and Scuderia

Yuki Tsunoda became only the second Japanese driver to lead a Grand Prix

- After taking P5 for McLaren, Lando Norris finishes sixth in the drivers' championship, one point away from finishing fourth.
- With Oscar Piastri adding to their points tally with P6, McLaren finish fourth in the constructors' championship, one place up on 2022.
- Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso took P7 and finishes fourth in the drivers' championship, his first top-five finish since being runner-up in 2012-13.
- AlphaTauri's Yuki Tsunoda finished in P8 and led a Grand Prix for the first time, becoming only the second Japanese driver to do so after Takuma Sato at the Nurburgring in 2004.

DRIVER OF THE DAY: Tsunoda gets your Abu Dhabi vote after superb strategic drive to P8

- Hamilton finished in P9, meaning he has only scored two points at Yas Marina in the last two years.
- Aston Martin's Lance Stroll finished P10 in the race and P10 in the drivers' championship.
- This was the first season-ending race ever to end without a single retirement.

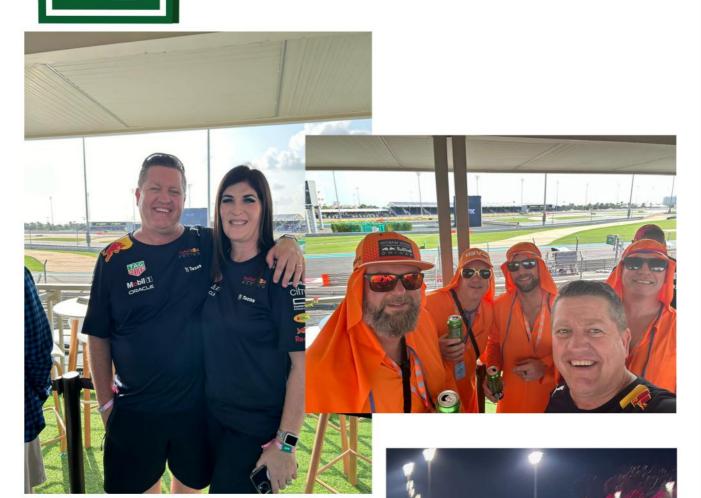
There are 97 days until the 2024 Bahrain Grand Prix.



The story of the extraordinary 2010 Abu Dhabi GP

F1 Hall of Fame journalist remembers an extraordinary day when four drivers battled it out for Thank you for sharing your memories. Please submit pics and videos to +27 62 617 5940 and give us permission to use them. No under 18's please









# Race Schedule LOCAL TIME

MY TIME

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V	e:	XΙ	C	0			÷	

Autódromo Hermanos Rodríguez 27-29 Oct

Max Verstappen 1:22.850

2 Lewis Hamilton 1:21.334

Charles Leclerc 1:22.905

Full Standings >

# Brazil 📀

Autódromo José Carlos Pace 03-05 Nov

# UPCOMING

Practice 1 03 Nov 16:30 Sprint 04 Nov 20:30

Qualifying 03 Nov 20:00 Race 05 Nov 19:00

Sprint 04 Nov 16:00 Shootout

# USA =

Las Vegas Street Circuit

17-19 Nov

# UPCOMING

Practice 1 17 Nov 06:30 Qualifying 18 Nov 10:00

Practice 2 17 Nov 10:00 Race 19 Nov 08:00

Practice 3 18 Nov 06:30

# U.A.E

Yas Marina Circuit

24-26 Nov

# **UPCOMING**

Practice 1 24 Nov 11:30 Qualifying 25 Nov 18:00

Practice 2 24 Nov 15:00 26 Nov 15:00 Race

Practice 3 25 Nov 12:30

# Full Schedule >

# 2024 Formula One calendar

March 2 - Bahrain Grand Prix (Sakhir)

March 9 - Saudi Arabian Grand Prix (Jeddah)

March 24 - Australian Grand Prix (Melbourne)

April 7 - Japanese Grand Prix (Suzuka)

April 21 - Chinese Grand Prix (Shanghai)

May 5 - Miami Grand Prix (Miami)

May 19 - Emilia Romagna Grand Prix (Imola)

May 26 - Monaco Grand Prix (Monte Carlo)

June 9 - Canadian Grand Prix (Montreal)

June 23 - Spanish Grand Prix (Barcelona)

June 30 - Austrian Grand Prix (Spielberg)

July 7 - British Grand Prix (Silverstone)

July 21 - Hungarian Grand Prix (Hungaroring)

July 28 - Belgian Grand Prix (Spa-Francorchamps

August 25 - Dutch Grand Prix (Zandvoort)

September 1 - Italian Grand Prix (Monza)

September 15 - Azerbaijan Grand Prix (Baku)

September 22 - Singapore Grand Prix (Marina Bay

October 20 - United States Grand Prix (Austin)

October 27 - Mexico City Grand Prix (Mexico City

November 3 - Brazilian Grand Prix (Interlagos)

November 23 - Las Vegas Grand Prix (Las Vegas)

December 1 - Qatar Grand Prix (Lusail)

December 8 - Abu Dhabi Grand Prix (Yas Marina)





# A LEGEND HAS FALLEN - RIP CELSO SCRIBANTE

Celso Scribante passed away on 11 October 2023, leaving behind a massive legacy for his sons to follow.

The son of Aldo Scribante Senior, after whom the famous racetrack in Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) is named, Celso was an avid supporter of son's Silvio and Aldo's racing careers, which saw the Gqeberha Kart Circuit named after him.

Celso was no slouch behind the wheel either, racing his Scribante Concrete Lamborghini Huracan GT3 in the Eastern Cape Saloon Car Championship, which he won in 2022, fulfilling a long-held ambition. He always, without hesitation, stepped up to the plate to invest in motorsport infrastructure without any consideration for reward.

He will be fondly remembered by his friends and racing rivals as a tough but fair competitor, and gentle guiding hand to his two boys, a motorsport legend and a great businessman.

MSA extends its condolences to Celso's family and friends and its thanks to Eric Buijs for providing the wording of this message.

















2022 represented the 73rd year of Grand Prix motorcycle racing and for KTM it was the sixth season as a competitor in the MotoGP class. The company were present in FIM Grand Prix World Championship's three categories and then in support series' with over 150 motorcycles and four different models. 2022 was the longest campaign on record: twenty rounds that stretched from Australian to Argentina, from March to November in six continents and was watched at the circuits by 2.42 million spectators.

# 72 HOURS WITH BRAD BINDER: MOTOGP'S MOST CHILLED-OUT RIDER.

We caught up with Brad Binder at the San Marino Grand Prix to learn about his path to the premier class and how he's become the master of self-control both on and off the bike.

There's one rider on the MotoGP grid who is seldom seen letting the pressure get to him. Never seen to give his crew a grilling, dishing out frustrated gestures at other riders on track, or lobbing controversial statements in the media. He just goes with the flow.

By contrast, his moves on the track are at this point legendary. He rides his motorcycle like it's a videogame, forcing it to do things it shouldn't be able to do. His overtakes are even more notorious, so much so that even eight-time World Champion Marc Márquez has been caught on camera disclosing how he feels more tense with this particular rider closing in on him.

He took the Moto3™ World Championship back in 2016, narrowly missed out on the Moto2™ title in 2019 but shocked the entire sport when he claimed his first MotoGP™ win in only his third race, KTM's first victory in the premier class. In 2023 he's poised to claim at least a top-four finish in the Championship overall and has cemented himself as one of the next giants of motorcycle racing.

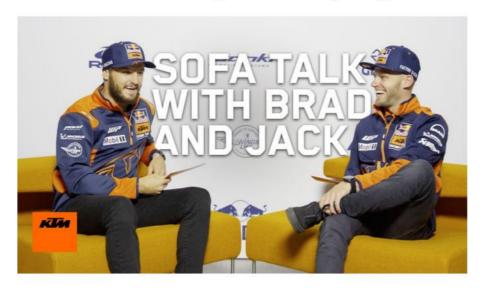
Even as he came and sat down to chat for this very article, he practically floated towards the table so laid back he could have fallen over.



BRAD BINDER AT A MOTOGP RACE IN CATALUNYA, SPAIN ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2023.

But let me tell you, Brad Binder is no Jekyll & Hyde. He has simply become a master of self-control through years of relentless hard graft and in this piece, you'll see exactly how.

From a small town in South Africa near Potchefstroom, it was a simple life growing up for Brad and his younger brother Darryn who also competes on the world stage of motorcycling.





"We went to school, came back, worked on motorbikes, played with motorbikes. I didn't really want to go to school but I had to anyway." A classic line from professional racers the world over.

"But I think where it's different to most people is me, my dad and my brother, we've always run our own bikes and done everything ourselves. If we wanted new tyres or needed to change a piston, we did it."



Binder during his days competing in the Rookies Cup in 2011 © Gold & Goose/Red Bull Content Pool

He admits he isn't a mechanical whizz and he's fortunate that his dad was more savvy with the spanners, but he didn't get let off easy by any means: "The old man was pretty strict, you had to look after your shit, clean your bikes and don't mess them up!"

Those early lessons in work ethic certainly came in handy as the racing started to get more serious. Brad's rise through the ranks from the Red Bull MotoGP™ Rookies Cup is well covered in his 'Becoming 33' documentary. But before that period is a story that perfectly encapsulates an impression I get from Brad about his talent: hard work ratio.

As Brad devoured the junior series on home soil, the Binders sought tougher competition elsewhere and swiftly found themselves heading to the UK to try their hand in a little-known series called the Aprilia Superteens, where legends of the sport like Casey Stoner got their first crack at the whip in European racing.

# I THINK I'VE GOT BETTER AS I'VE GOT OLDER. AS A KID, ESPECIALLY AT THE BEGINNING OF MOTO3™, I WASN'T VERY GOOD - BRAD BINDER

"How the story actually went was we got to Brands Hatch and I crashed the bike in the first or second session, pretty much destroyed the thing," he explained.

"My dad got it fixed for the last session. The next morning I qualified fifth. In the races I finished second in the first heat, in the second heat I remember riding into somebody and going off track and finished sixth or something. And then the next morning in the warm-up session, my bike seized and I woke up in hospital!"

Enough raw speed was shown to continue pursuing the dream abroad, but Brad's rise through the ranks is probably more akin to the Superteens saga than it is a straight path to success.



Some athletes have talent, some have great work ethic, and the best have both. Brad's pretty sure about where he lies: "I think I've got better as I've got older. As a kid, especially at the beginning of the Rookies Cup and Moto3™, I wasn't very good.

"But my old man always taught me that if you're going to do something, do it properly. If not, don't do it at all."

This is clear to see in everything Brad does. From the substantial number of media commitments on Thursdays, carried out with grace and good manners, to some of the more intense moments, like walking from his private room in the team truck suited and booted to the pit box, yet still finding time to greet some important team guests. His team also embody this mantra. A multi-national crew of Brits, Czech, Finnish, German, Spanish and so on. If there's one set of mechanics and engineers in this paddock where I can actually believe them when they say they are like family, it's this one. No matter what the result, the atmosphere in the box remains constant.

Mechanics work on the bike of Brad Binder during the San Marino Grand Prix.



THE MECHANICS GET TO WORK ON BINDER'S BIKE © MATT DUNN

I asked Brad later on about his dad's philosophy, as well as things I'd noticed in his documentary, and while strict, he didn't seem like the motocross dad stereotype. He answered: "My dad never gave me a hard time, unless I deserved it!"

He continued: "If he saw I was giving my best, that was enough. But if he saw any time that I was being soft or that you weren't doing what you could have on the day, he'd let you know about it. I think it's been the best thing that could have ever happened to me."

He certainly needed that dogged spirit and stubbornness to always bring the best of himself in his early years of Moto3™.

Uncompetitive machinery left him substantially undergunned in his debut years, and even though he showed enough talent to earn himself a spot on the best bike in the best team in 2015, that wasn't plain sailing either.

"I thought hey, here we go, now you're set. But the reality was when I got there I wasn't up for it.



# I CAN LIVE MY DREAM WHICH IS TO BE A MOTOGP™ RIDER. BUT MY DREAM IS TO WIN AND I'VE NOT QUITE GOT THAT RIGHT... YET.

"I would crash quite a lot, I'd panic in certain situations and make a mess of things. I was my own worst enemy because I wanted to win every single race from the beginning."

But luckily there's one man we've met before in this series, who was another instrumental part of Brad's development, Aki Ajo.

"He taught me how to control things, how to work on different situations, always try and stay calm regardless and get on with your job."

The extreme demonstration of this self-control Brad had to develop came six years later at the 2021 Austrian Grand Prix, where Brad took victory at KTM's home race in the pouring rain, while riding on slicks (bald tyres to the uninitiated). A race that has to be seen to be believed.

Brad believes his lack of success in his early years and making the choice to dig in and get on with the job is the reason why he's able to embrace the pressures today of being a factory rider fighting for the number one spot in the sport.

"A lot of kids are super talented, they go fast on anything, they come and dominate and get these struggles - that I had earlier on - later on in their career where everything is a lot more cutthroat.

"If you're already one of the top riders and you're not performing then it's goodbye."

He admits his first year at world level was also a case of "perform, or don't come back", which I've found to be a common story throughout this series with similar scenarios befalling Jorge Martín, Pedro Acosta and Tony Arbolino. The ability to rise to the challenge when it's as simple as 'this is it...' can be what separates the good from the great.



This doesn't mean that he's faultless, however. This could have been the last of this interview series as Brad had promised me if he got the Sprint and Grand Prix wins like Martín did when we followed him in Germany, he'd hire me.

Alas, there was no such fairytale for Brad here at the San Marino Grand Prix. He was fifth in Saturday's sprint race, and on Sunday he crashed while chasing the podium. But like his dad taught him many years ago, you do it properly or not at all. That's why he picked his bike back up and fought back through the field from 23rd to finish 14th with two points in the bag.

And no, he wasn't 'chill' about it. He did, however, remain in control. Hence why he finished the job and saw that chequered flag. Brad Binder is greeted by his team after the San Marino Grand Prix.

As the team rallied around him in the box, I'm reminded of what he said on Thursday: "F\*ck, racing can be the best day ever followed by being in the gutter and things just aren't happening. It makes you appreciate what you do more.

"I enjoy the process of riding and analysing what I can do better and even when things are going terribly, I like being able to always tell myself that I can make this situation different and I'm better than the problems we have at the moment."

There's nothing laid back about that approach, as he stresses that the most important part of that process is at the end of it, finishing as the rider with his name inscribed on the Tower of Champions at the end of the season.

"Anyone that has worked with me knows I'm not chill. When it comes to what I want to achieve, I give my best and I expect the same from everyone else.

"I can live my dream which is to be a MotoGP™ rider. But my dream is to win and I've not quite got that right... yet."



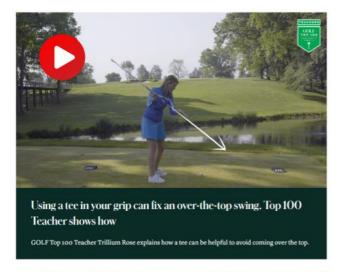


## HOW TO AVOID THESE 2 ROUND-KILLING MISTAKES

BY: JESSICA MARKSBURY, JONATHAN BUCHANAN, GOLF TEACHER TO WATCH

We've all been there: The round is going well, you're chugging along. Maybe you've mis-hit a shot or two, or botched a few putts, but overall, things are okay. Then, it happens: the big blow-up. The hole or series of shots where everything goes wrong, derailing your entire round.

Experiencing this kind of disappointment can be demoralizing regardless of when in the round it occurs. But part of becoming a better player is learning how to recognize potential round-killers and overcoming them before they affect you, protecting both your score and your sanity.





7 'ROADBLOCKS' TO AVOID IF YOU WANT TO BE GREAT, ACCORDING TO JORDAN SPIETH'S COACH



JONATHAN BUCHANAN IS THE FOUNDER OF CITY GOLF CLUB IN DALLAS, TEXAS, AND ONE OF GOLF'S 2024-25 TEACHERS TO WATCH.

While specific round-killers can vary by player, there are a few that are universally afflicting. According to GOLF Teacher to Watch Jonathan Buchanan, playing the hero is one major round-killer that recreational players would be wise to avoid.

"When most amateurs get in trouble, they stay in trouble," Buchanan said. "Meaning they often try to do too much instead of using their next shot to ensure they get back into a playable position in the fairway. That's where you find a lot of triples and big numbers."

The other problem, Buchanan said, is that many recreational players tend to hold themselves to irrationally high standards, expecting to duplicate the best shot of their life at a given moment.

"Many players will be faced with a shot, say 200, 220 yards over water, and they think that the one 5-wood they've hit in their life that goes that far should be that shot," he said. "Instead, I recommend breaking that shot down by half. Let's hit it 100 yards, and then 100 yards again. I think getting confidence in that is a good thing."

# MAX HOMA CLOSES OUT SURPRISE VICTORY AT NEDBANK GOLF CHALLENGE 2023 THAT LEFT RORY MCILROY A WINNER, TOO. HERE'S WHY.... BY RYAN HERRINGTON

Max Homa would likely have described his time in South Africa as a success regardless of his finish at the Nedbank Golf Challenge. The opportunity to compete in a different part of the world was one the 32-year-old Californian couldn't pass up, turning it into a family trip by arriving early with his wife Lacey and taking in a safari excursion with fellow PGA Tour pro Justin Thomas and his wife, Jill.

But with a 19-under 269 total at Gary Player Country Club in Sun City, capped by a closing six-under 66, Homa is taking home a trophy and a €961,124.05 first-place prize money payout from his working vacation. Homa won his first DP World Tour title (to go with six PGA Tour victories) by defeating Nicolai Hojgaard by four shots (and a hard-charging Thomas, who finished fourth but seven shots back).

"It's just been tremendous to get to travel to a new place, meet so many amazing people," said Homa, the fifth American to win the tournament (along with Jim Furyk twice, Johnny Miller, Raymond Floyd and Corey Pavin) but the first since it became a DP World Tour event. "The fans have been amazing. Everyone has been so welcoming and kind."

Never mind that Homa hadn't played competitively since the final day of the Ryder Cup on Oct. 1, or in a stroke-play event since the Fortinet Championship in mid-September. And forget the fact that Homa still hadn't found his comfort zone with the 10-hour time change until a few days into the tournament. His game was spot on, playing bogey-free golf through his first 39 holes and making just three all week.





Suffice it to say, Homa's putter came in handy at clutch moments. Like here at the 16th hole on Sunday. Homa, who opened the day with a one-stroke lead over Matthieu Pavon, was clinging to the two-shot margin, now of Hojgaard and Thorbjorn Olesen, as he faced this 38-foot birdie opportunity on the par-3 16th hole.

"It was one of those weeks, the ball wanted to go in when it needed to," Homa said. And it was also one of those weeks where good breaks came at the right time too, like with this drive on the par-5 14th hole.

"To be granted the opportunity to even be here, I was truly grateful for," Homa said, "but to come out with a trophy is just cherry on top."

As it turned out, Homa wasn't the only "big winner" after the end of the Nedbank. So, too, was Rory McIlroy, despite the fact the Northern Irishman wasn't even in the field.

McIlroy began the penultimate event on the 2023 DP World Tour schedule in first place in the tour's Race to Dubai points list and was assured to remain No. 1 afterward regardless of the outcome. Yet by virtue of Homa's victory, coupled with the performance of the rest of the field, McIlroy will arrive at the upcoming DP World Tour Championship having clinched the season-long title for the fifth time in his career no matter the outcome during the coming week in Dubai. McIlroy has 5,164.47 points while Jon Rahm, sitting in second, has 3,081.94. The winner earns 2,000 points.

McIlroy previously had been the winner of the Order of Merit in 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2022. Only two golfers have won the title more often: Colin Montgomerie having claimed it eight times and Seve

DP World Tour









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# MCILROY RECALLS RYDER 'RED MIST' EVEN TIGER COULDN'T STOP

GOLF14 NOVEMBER 2023 20:31 | © REUTERS

When in Rome, Rory McIlroy was all business during the 2023 Ryder Cup.

All business to the extent he didn't pick up the phone when Tiger Woods repeatedly reached out on a peacekeeping mission to douse any lingering flames from the disruption between McIlroy and Woods's former caddie, Joe LaCava.

McIlroy's greenside spat with LaCava, serving as American Patrick Cantlay's caddie, created a tremendous uproar on the second-to-last day of the event before Europe's coronation at Marco Simone Golf Club just outside Rome.

McIlroy recalled the incident with the favour of hindsight this week and provided fresh context of the Ryder Cup Saturday hubbub that included teammate Shane Lowry restraining the Northern Irishman after a heated argument in the course parking lot. NBC television cameras captured McIlroy shouting "This can't happen. It's a (expletive) disgrace."

He originally was held back by his wife before Lowry helped McIlroy to his vehicle.

As it played out on television, the outburst came after McIlroy and Englishman Matt Fitzpatrick lost their match against Patrick Cantlay and Wyndham Clark of the United States team on the 18th hole.



RORY MCILROY @ GALLO IMAGES

Cantlay sank three consecutive birdies, including a 43-footer at No 18, en route to the victory over McIlroy and Fitzpatrick. He then made the motion of his tipping his cap to the crowd, which had been mocking him by waving their hats in the wake of a report by British media that Cantlay wasn't wearing a team-issued hat to protest American players not getting paid to participate in the Ryder Cup.

LaCava also, seemingly with a taunting energy, waved his hat while on the green.

Tempers flared as McIlroy asked LaCava to move out of his way, which LaCava did, but then the caddie was shown saying something to McIlroy.

Fast forward to McIlroy's recall of what transpired in an interview this week with the Irish Independent, and the moments where McIlroy felt his emotions devolve into "red mist" of fury.

"Here's what angered me," McIlroy explained during his sit-down with Paul Kimmage.

"My relationship with Cantlay is average at best. We don't have a ton in common and see the world quite differently. But when I saw he was getting stick on the 17th and 18th greens I tried to quiet the crowd for him. And I don't think [Matt] Fitz[patrick] and I were afforded the same opportunity to try and hole those putts to halve the match. I hit a decent putt, but I under-read it basically, and Fitz hit a good putt but left it short, right in the jaws. ... I shook Joe's hand, and Patrick's hand. Those three putts he made on 16, 17 and 18 were fantastic, and under that pressure, to give your team a glimmer of hope going into Sunday was big balls. So, all respect to him. There was a bit of argybargy at the back of the 18th green with Fred Couples and Thomas Bjorn and that's fine - but as I'm walking back to the locker room, I can feel this red mist coming over me: 'No! That wasn't right.'"



Lowry played bouncer again, separating McIlroy and Justin Thomas's caddie, Bones Mackay, in Marco Simone's valet line, McIlroy ran into Brooks Koepka's caddie, Ricky Elliott, and instructor, Claude Harmon III.

"We get to the hotel, and as you come into the lobby we go left to our wing of the hotel, and the Americans go right to their wing," McIlroy said.

"So, we're going left and someone is shouting at me, 'Rory! Rory!', and I look back and it's Ricky Elliott and Claude Harmon. And they're trying to diffuse the situation. But I start having a go at them: 'Joe LaCava used to be a nice guy when he was caddieing for Tiger, and now he's caddieing for that d-- he's turned into a-.' I still wasn't in a great headspace."

McIlroy said he cooled down literally and figuratively with eight minutes in a 6-degree cold bath, then reported as scheduled to the Team Europe room.

He said he thought he was "in trouble" when European captain Luke Donald entered.

"But he goes, 'Rory! I f— loved that!' And all the boys started banging the table. It was brilliant. It had been a really deflating finish, but it galvanized the team," he said.

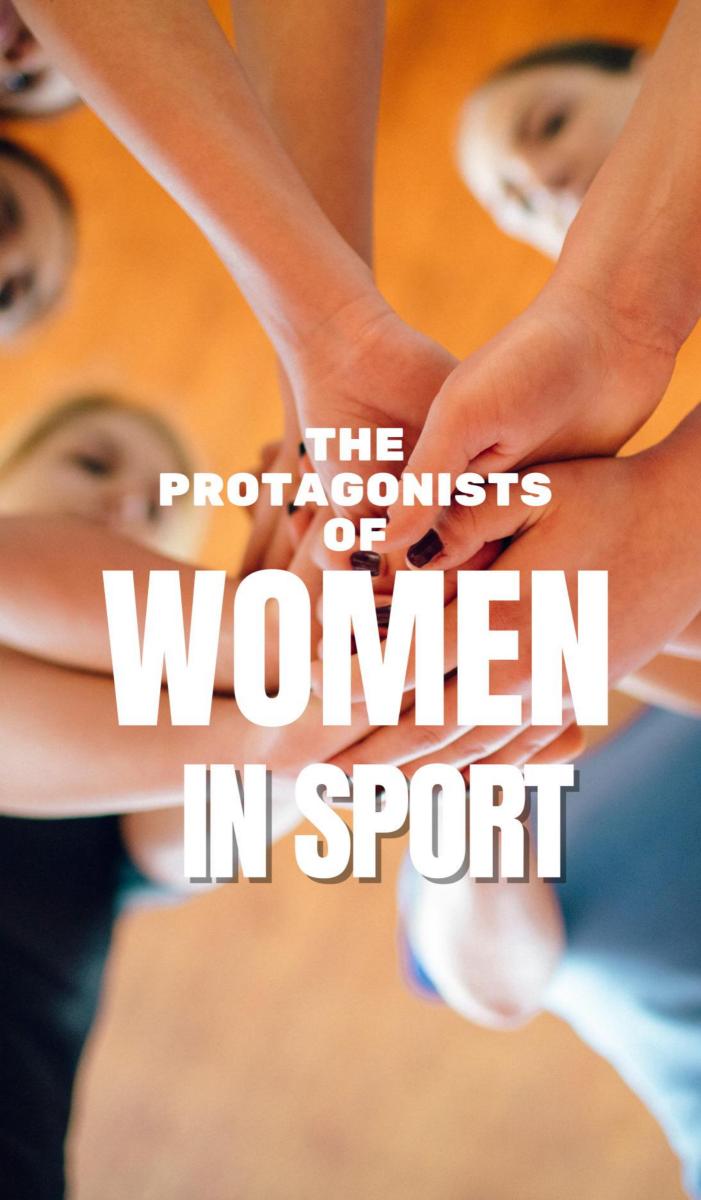
During the team ruckus, McIlroy said he ignored text messages from LaCava asking to meet to iron out the issues and dismissed multiple calls and three text messages from Woods. At the end of the night, McIlroy did acknowledge Woods' outreach but declined to talk.

What did he tell Tiger?

"I sent him a quick message: It will be fine ... long day ... just want to go to bed."







# WOMEN HAVE A LONG HISTORY IN GOLF, SOME SOURCES DATING INVOLVEMENT BACK AS EARLY AS THE 1500S.

The sport more widely accepted women in the late 1800s and was bolstered by the creation of the Ladies' Professional Golf Association (LPGA) in 1950. With the eventual opening of doors to women at some of the most elite clubs, previously only for men, the golf scene is more diverse and talented than ever before. Here are a few of our favorite women athletes that have made a mark on the sport.

#### **Anne Van Dam**

Since going pro in 2015, Anne Van Dam has created a name for herself on the Ladies Professional Golf Association Tour (LPGA Tour) and Ladies European Tour. She has seven professional wins and was a fan favorite on the 2019 European Solheim Cup winning team.

One look at Anne's fluid swing confirms her future star status. In late 2018, a four-second swing video posted to her Twitter account went viral. Why? Many called it the best swing since Hogan or Snead. Sources state she credits her parents, both pilots, who instilled structure into their kids at a young age. The foundation of structure revolved around practice... and more practice. Many kids have structure, but none have her swing.

Anne's swing isn't just beautiful, it is technically perfect. According to her LPGA performance stats, her 281.85-yard average establishes her in top three in driving distance on the LPGA Tour.

Keep an eye on Anne. Her name will likely become a household name in the next few years.

Follow Anne Van Dam on social media:

Instagram: @annievdam Twitter: @annevandam



#### **Glenna Collett Vare**

Many consider Glenna Collett Vare the female Bobby Jones. Jones once said, "Aside from her skill with her clubs, Miss Collett typified all that the word 'sportsmanship' stands for."

Her dominance of the golf world in the 1920s led to her induction into the World Golf Hall of Fame—as an amateur! Notably, professional women's golf only began after World War II.

According to the World Golf Hall of Fame, she won The U.S. Women's Amateur Championship title six times from 1922-1935. She bagged the Canadian Championship in 1923 and 1924 and the French Championship in 1925.

In tribute to her outstanding achievements, the Vare Trophy is awarded to the player with the lowest average score each year on the LPGA Tour.

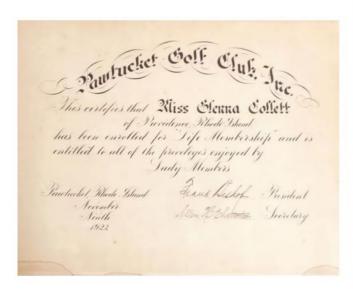
Great in golf? Yes. However, Glenna was also a leader in fashionable performance apparel, of high interest to us at KJUS. Partly with her guidance, 1920s women's golf apparel became more breathable, comfortable and practical. Sweaters replaced stiff jackets, skirts became pleated to allow movement and knits were introduced to also allow for improved freedom of movement.

We were lucky enough to meet her granddaughter, Jesse Vare, who was more than happy to share insights on her witty grandmother. "Glenna was a special lady... She had a dry sense of humor and was very, very witty," said Vare. "Although I only met her a few times, she sure left a lasting impression."

Glenna's fashion sense added charm to her accomplishments on the course. Who knows? Maybe we will look to her for some

inspiration in our next collection.

Learn more about Glenna







#### Iona Stephen

Iona Stephen is the newest host of IMG and Golf TV's "Golfing World." Her work takes her around the world interviewing professional golfers and featuring amazing golf courses. She also hosts Sky Sports Golf, often commentating on the Majors.

Due to a wrist injury in 2017 that ended her professional golf career, she launched a career in broadcasting. Her lively commentary cause many to look to her social media accounts to learn about great courses and amazing products. Her personality shines through the camera, and her fun banter with Tour pros demonstrates her ability to make connections.

Originally from Edinburgh, just 50 miles away from The Home of Golf, she studied at the University of St. Andrews. One could say golf is in her blood. We are lucky to call her a KJUS friend.

Follow Iona Stephen on social media:

Instagram: @ionastephen Twitter: @iona\_stephen

### JANINE VAN WYK BACK IN BANYANA SQUAD AS SHE CHASES AFRICAN RECORD

MAHLATSE MPHAHLELE SPORTS REPORTER





Banyana Banyana stalwart Janine van Wyk is in line to finally become the most-capped African player of all-time.

Van Wyk, 36, is on 183 international caps in a glorious career and needs only two matches to become the most-capped player – male or female – on the continent.

That dream is a distinct possibility after coach Desiree Ellis included Van Wyk in the defending champions' 24-player squad to face Burkina Faso in their two-legged 2024 Women's Africa Cup of Nations (Wafcon) qualifier later this month.

The first leg is in Yamoussoukro, Burkina Faso on November 30 (6.30pm SA time) and the return match at Lucas Moripe Stadium on December 4 (3pm).

"We will do our outmost best to get her these two caps," Ellis said

announcing her squad on Thursday.

BANYANA BANYANA COACH DESIREE ELLIS ON JANINE VAN WYK. "It is not just a record for her but for women's football in the country, on the continent and for Safa. She was in the previous camp against Democratic Republic of Congo [Banyana's 3-1 aggregate Olympic qualifying win last month]. I said then there would be another opportunity and here is another opportunity."

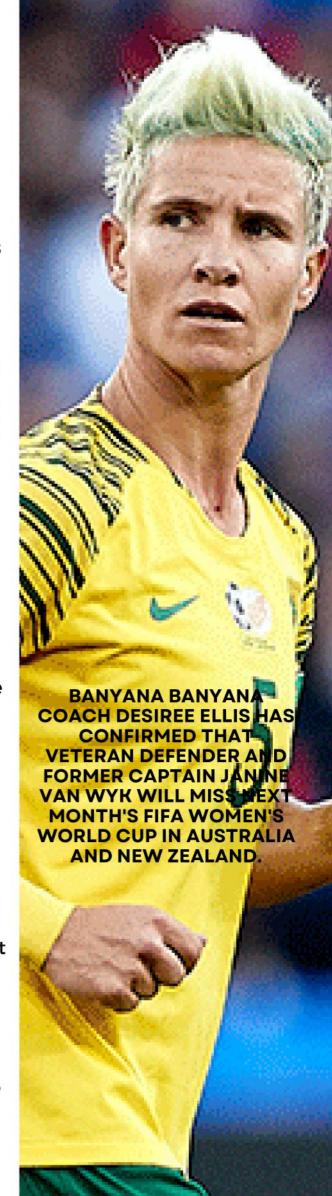
Van Wyk is not the only player who is chasing a significant milestone. Attacker Mpumi Nyandeni is on 149 caps and Ellis said there is a plan to see her move to 150.

"Janine was the first one to reach out and say she was retiring. Mpumi is the second that has reached out. We have had conversations with her and there is definitely something in the pipeline. I can confidently say that I am busy with that."

Ellis will be without key players due to injuries and school examinations. "Bambanani Mbane, Refiloe Jane, Thalea Smidt, Bongeka Gamede, Sibulele Holweni and Nomvula Kgoale are not available due to various injuries. Sinoxolo Cesane is also not available because her university said if she misses any more classes she will not get her degree." Ellis said it is important Banyana progress past Burkina Faso so they can defend their title. "It is not just any match but final qualifier for Afcon. We are the defending champions and if we don't win this match, we won't be at the tournament to defend our title.

"We have to make sure we do well in these two games, especially in the first game away from home. We must make sure that we take away the pressure of playing at home by getting something in Burkina Faso.

"We all know the pressure of playing at home and how difficult it can be for the players. We will make sure we have enough information about Burkina Faso — we already have an analysis on them and it has been shared with the players.



"We know exactly what we need to do but it is executing the game plan and making sure that we get a positive result [away].

"Coming home for the return leg, we will have fans in the stadium. In the last match against DR Congo they were magnificent and motivated the players and we are asking for that to happen again." The 2024 Wafcon will be in Morocco again.

#### **Banyana Squad**

Goalkeeper: Andile Dlamini, Kaylin Swart, Katlego Moletsane Defenders: Karabo Dhlamini, Fikile Magama, Faith Nokuthula, Janine van Wyk,

Lebohang Ramalepe, Noko Matlou, Asanda Hadebe, Lonathemba Mhlongo

Midfielders: Linda Motlhalo, Kholosa Biyana, Sphumelele Shamase, Amogelang Matlou, Thubelihle Shamase

Forwards: Nicole Michael, Gabriela Salgado, Samkelisiwe Selana, Jermaine Seoposenwe, Noxolo Cesane, Wendy Shongwe, Hildah Magaia, Thembi Kgatlana



BANYANA BANYANA
COACH DESIREE ELLIS HAS
CONFIRMED THAT
VETERAN DEFENDER AND
FORMER CAPTAIN JANINE
VAN WYK WILL MISS NEXT
MONTH'S FIFA WOMEN'S
WORLD CUP IN AUSTRALIA
AND NEW ZEALAND.





# ANTHONY JOSHUA AND DEONTAY WILDER TO FIGHT SEPARATE OPPONENTS IN DEC 23 SAUDI MEGA SHOW

LONDON – Former world heavyweight champions Deontay Wilder and Anthony Joshua will fight separate opponents on the same bill at a mega show in Saudi Arabia on Dec 23, the promoters confirmed on Wednesday.

Briton Joshua, the former WBA (World Boxing Association), IBF (International Boxing Federation) and WBO (World Boxing Organisation) champion, will take on Sweden's Otto Wallin.

American Wilder, the former WBC (World Boxing Council) champion, faces New Zealand's Joseph Parker at Riyadh's Kingdom Arena.

Parker is also a former WBO champion.

Joshua and Wilder could fight each other in 2024 if both win in Riyadh.

The Dec 23 show will also feature two world title clashes, with WBA light-heavyweight champion Dmitry Bivol scheduled to fight Britain's Lyndon Arthur, while Australian IBF cruiserweight champion Jai Opetaia takes on Britain's Ellis Zorro.

British heavyweight Daniel Dubois, who lost to WBA, IBF and WBO champion Oleksandr Usyk in Poland in August, will be back in the ring to fight undefeated American Jarrell Miller.

Ukrainian Usyk had been due to fight WBC champion Tyson Fury for the undisputed crown in Riyadh on Dec 23 but that has been put back to give the Briton more time after a bruising non-title fight with Francis Ngannou.



A date for that fight was due to be announced on Thursday, with February looking likely.

Joshua said in October that a fight between him and Wilder could be staged on the undercard of the Usyk-Fury clash, when it happens.



ANTHONY JOSHUA (LEFT) AND DEONTAY WILDER COULD FIGHT EACH OTHER IN 2024 IF BOTH WIN IN RIYADH. PHOTO: REUTERS

Matchroom Boxing's Eddie Hearn, meanwhile, said the Riyadh show, led by Queensberry Promotions' Frank Warren, had come together in record time thanks to the Saudi authorities.

"This is the fastest I've ever seen a fight card come together," he told a news conference held in London.

"We're talking about conversations that started 10 days ago, max, and that wasn't even necessarily AJ (Joshua) at the time. That was Dmitry Bivol, that was Jai Opetaia and then it went into AJ.

"I've never seen anything like it. I think the speed of it actually benefited everybody because no one really had time to fall out."

The card is also the latest high-profile sporting event to be held in Saudi Arabia, amid scrutiny on the Gulf state's poor human rights record.

The country has continually increased its investment in global sport - including golf, Formula One and the impending hosting of football's 2034 World Cup amid others - but critics have said that it is all

"sportswashing".

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said in September he is not bothered by those accusations and is concerned only with increasing his nation's gross domestic product. REUTERS

## EXPLORE

WITH CHAMPION TOURS

### **VIETNAM**

There's more to Vietnam than the traditional image of rice paddies and conical hats. Here you'll find a country bursting with energy and forward motion.

#### **BLUE CAFE REVIEW**

This Blue Rocks Cafe and Grill is simply more than a seafood restaurant, due to its sumptuous and varied Mediterranean menu, it takes advantage of the best food around. Nature's Valley.



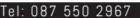
This luxurious boutique hotel offers the ultimate escape with its warm hospitality, cutting-edge design, light-filled interiors, contemporary colours, soft furnishings and lush indigenous gardens. Accommodation comprises 14 luxury rooms tastefully decorated, well-appointed with luxury amenities and all with their own private terrace.

The restaurant, open to the public offers seasonal menus and caters for breakfast, lunch and dinner.



Gallery

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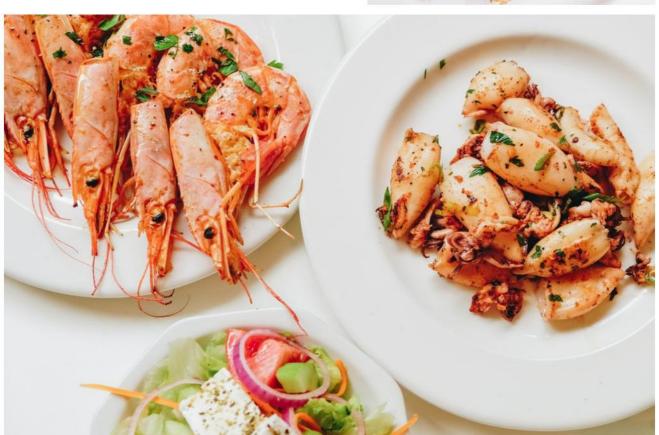
### THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD by Robin Ball

This Blue Rocks Cafe and Grill is simply more than a seafood restaurant, due to its sumptuous and varied Mediterranean menu, it takes advantage of the best food around. Nature's Valley. The new owner Melissa Allardice ( who was previously cooking away in Cape Town's Hope Street, with her friendly manner ) ensured our visit was memorable.



**ROBIN AND MANNY** 





It should be noted that the real reason for my discovery of this Blue Rocks Cafe & Grill was due to my reading of an article written by Lin Sampson for the Daily Maverick, some time back in mid 2022.

To encourage my Portuguese Family to test the Food of this Seafood spot, worthy of the very short trip - only some 21km north of Plettenberg Bay. The Blue Rocks Cafe and Grill is the only restaurant in Nature's Valley, only a short distance from the waters edge.

Melissa cooks up something special with her 30 local staff, who work hard every day of the week: opening at 8am and taking daily last orders at latest 8pm.

To start our meal we began with Patagonian calamari. It was followed by backwater Hake, combined with spices and squeezed lemon juice, as ordered together with quirky flavoured Chips

Manny, a friend who joined us, is addicted to his favourite Portuguese Sardines, and decided to order them to test them. He is a tough critic. It arrived grilled with a sprinkling of sweet smoked paprika, a sprig of Rosemary and squeezed lemon juice which was truly delicious, as it always provides him with extreme pleasure. It passed the "Manny" test which reminded him of his early days in his Estreito da Calheta village in Madeira,

Manny's main course was to enjoy the Blue Rocks Cafe and Grill signature dish namely the Australian Prawns which were grilled in their shells and smouldering with 'Just off the fire' succulence and were simply mouth watering.

It was certainly worth our short drive from nearby Plettenberg Bay as it's also part of the Bitou Municipality - or a rather long 7 hour drive from Cape Town; a fairly short 2:5 hour drive from Gqeberha; or from further afield that gives us all the pleasure of excellent TGIFoods on the Western Cape's Garden Route

NOTE: The meal was settled in full and the review is published as a true reflection of our visit.







There's more to Vietnam than the traditional image of rice paddies and conical hats. Here you'll find a country bursting with energy and forward motion. You'll feel it in the hum and activity on the streets. You'll see it in the way Vietnamese welcome you to their homes, invite you to taste their food, and proudly show you their rich culture. You'll sense it in the options and opportunities all around. Simply put, there's never been a more exciting time to visit. Whatever you travel for, you can find it in #VietnamNOW.





Vietnam, country occupying the eastern portion of mainland Southeast Asia.

Tribal Viets inhabiting the Red River delta entered written history when China's southward expansion reached them in the 3rd century BCE. From that time onward, a dominant theme of Vietnam's history has been interaction with China, the source of most of Vietnam's high culture. As a tribute-paying state after throwing off Chinese rule in 938 CE, Vietnam sent lacquerware, animal skins, ivory, and tropical products to the Chinese emperor and received scrolls on philosophy, administration, and literature in return. Sinic culture seeped deeply into society, but it shaped the aristocracy and mandarinal families more than it did the peasantry, which preserved distinctive customs, beliefs, vocabulary, lifeways, and gender relations.

Modeling themselves on Chinese emperors, Vietnam's kings exacted tribute from ethnic minorities on the periphery of the Vietnamese state and called themselves emperors when not addressing the Chinese court. Although cultural and spatial gaps between the Vietnamese court and the farthest reaches of society were not as great as they were in China (Vietnam is about the size of a Chinese province, with a comparable population), the Vietnamese state's capacity to rule diminished with distance from the capital. The refractory character of bamboo-hedged peasant communes was captured in the cliché, "The emperor's writ stops at the village gate."



Vietnam has a long history of affiliating with a dominant civilization and adapting that civilization's ideas, institutions, and technology to Vietnamese purposes. This pattern of affiliating and adapting was already evident in Vietnam's historical relations with China, and it reappeared as descendants of mandarins responded to the challenge of the West by rejecting tradition and becoming communists to combat colonialism. The pattern was evident again as it animated 20th-century artistic movements that employed Western forms to promote social renovation; and since the 1980s it has been the driving force behind the Vietnam Communist Party's embrace of economic liberalization and integration into the world economy. Such strategic absorption and adaptation have helped propel Vietnam to become one of the world's most populous countries, with one of the most rapidly expanding market economies.

The capital, Hanoi, is located in the north, while the country's largest city, Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), is in the south. Vietnam experienced a period of prolonged warfare in the mid-20th century, and a partitioning (1954–75), first militarily and later politically, into the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, better known as North Vietnam, and the Republic of Vietnam, usually called South Vietnam. Following reunification in April 1975, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was established in July 1976.





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#### **INCLUDED**

\*\* Please note prices may vary according to fluctuations in the exchange rate

- Accommodation in double/twin share room with daily breakfast
- · Tours and transfers as mentioned by air-conditioned vehicle
- Local English-speaking guides
- Meals where mentioned (B: breakfast; L: lunch; D: dinner)
- Entrance fees
- Government taxes and service charges
- Vietnam Evisa
- Domestic flight tickets in economy class: Hanoi Danang;
   Danang Ho Chi Minh;
- International flight tickets in economy class: Hochiminh Siem Reap

#### **EXCLUDED**

- Personal expenses (laundry, telephone, drinks, tip...)
- Travel insurance
- Cambodia Visa
- · International airfares
- Single supplement for single room

GHATION'S PAREL

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