



NOCZ



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Secretary General's reflection

It's time for serious Tokyo Games preparations

I AM delighted to share this newsletter marking the National Olympic Committee of Zambia (NOCZ) 11th edition. I must admit that getting to publish this edition was not a small achievement and I sincerely thank you all for the support thus far.

As you will read from the content in this publication, this edition marking the first quarter of the year has been centred on Olympic Games preparations. Looking towards athletes qualifying for the country and preparation for those that have already qualified, gearing to represent Zambia competitively.

But with COVID-19, it has not been an easy first quarter. As you remember in the second week of January, we had to call off intense training for two weeks for the athletes after the persistence of the second wave of the pandemic.

Even our operations at the office had to adopt a new schedule of working from home, all in a bid to ensure work keeps moving but also protect our people's lives.

On a sad note, we lost legendary former Commonwealth and Olympian boxer Anthony Mwamba and Thomas Mumba who was until his demise Zambia Hockey Association (ZHA) General Secretary.

The passing of the two was preceded by the death of Matilda Mwaba, the former Zambia Judo Association president who at the time of her demise the CEO for NOWSPAR, sports NGO with a focus to support the girl child.

The three deaths which occurred in a space of nine days was a

challenging period to deal with the grief for the sports fraternity. However, not all has been doom and gloom. There have been notable positives.

To start with, we welcomed two new members into our Secretariat. Among them Ms Gloria Makungu Khondowe as our Administration Officer and Ms Prudence Nswana Hachitapika taking up a new portfolio within our structure as a Safe Sport officer.

The two have settled in quite well and I am happy to welcome them and wish them all the best in their work.

Aside from that, we successfully held the Commonwealth Day celebration on March 8 at OYDC Zambia-Sports Development Centre.

It was a small gathering but with notable participation especially from young people countrywide and beyond who took part in the essay writing competitions to commemorate the Day.

Two winners emerged, Angela Halubobya from the University of Zambia in the tertiary category and

“For the time being the focus is on intense preparations for the games and I urge all the federations to play their part in seeing to it that athletes are well trained before the games.”

Wilson Nkhoma from Kamwala Secondary School for the juniors.

On the field, our athletes continued working hard with Rhoda Njobvu becoming the latest qualifier for the Olympics thanks to her emphatic 11.12 seconds time in 100 metres at



BONIFACE Kambikambi
Secretary General, NOCZ

the All Comers Meet.

As an executive we are happy for her achievement and urge her to work even harder as she prepares for the games.

We are confident that more athletes have an opportunity to qualify before the close of the qualification period.

For the time being the focus is on intense preparations for the games and I urge all the federations to play their part in seeing to it that athletes are well trained before the games.

The NOCZ Executive Board will continue to offer support where possible to the athletes and their technical teams within the synchronised programmes in their preparations. All the best to our athletes and coaches.

Remember to Mask Up, Observe social distancing and keep a healthy/clean environment all the time.

Happy reading!

Reliving Rhoda's Olympics qualification

NOCZ President assures her and other athletes of support heading to the Games

by **CHISHIMBA BWALYA**

ON March 20, sprinter Rhoda Njobvu became the latest athlete to qualify for the Olympic Games from Zambia with her breath-taking 11.12 seconds finish in 100 metres which beat the qualification time by three milliseconds.

It was a deserved achievement for an athlete who so far had done everything possible to qualify but almost to no avail.

Two weeks before the milestone achievement, she clocked 11.16, a millisecond shy of the required time. And it looked like the end of the road for her as she had spent almost a year at 11.20s and training hard for her to beat the time.

It was an emotional moment not only for her but everyone that watched, with hopes that she beats the time.

But it is famously said that 'good things come to those who wait' and so did they come for

the Green Eagles sprinter. Under the scorching heat of National Heroes Stadium and in full view of media houses and that of the international athletes too, she blazed through in energetic style.

She had seven other competitors alongside her but as fate would eventually tell, only the timing machine placed at the end of the finish line was her opponent.

She won, and after it was confirmed that she had qualified, everyone including her own opponents joined in the moment of felicitations led mostly by Zambia Athletics (ZA) President Elias Mpondela.

For a moment, celebrating Rhoda being the first woman to qualify in 100m and having done it on home soil was all that mattered to everyone who watched on that day.

National Olympics Committee of Zambia (NOCZ) President Alfred Foloko, fully aware of the magnitude of Rhoda's achievement, was very assuring of his executive's support towards

every athlete that had qualified for the games.

"We have the resources and we will place them for the athletes," he said, "There are funds available, so their technical team and ours are working to ensure that these athletes are given the best. Ours is to provide the resources and their technical team is to put up programmes that will enhance these athletes."

So far, sprinters Rhoda, Sydney Siame, boxers Stephen Zimba, Patrick Chinyemba and Evaristo Mulenga, Zambia women's football team and swimmer Tilka Paljk are the confirmed participants for the country.

But the NOCZ President is hopeful that there could be more athletes joining, especially judoka Steven Mung'andu.

"We have different qualifying situations depending on the sport, for Steve for us as NOCZ we are confident that he will qualify, he just has to make sure that he does not lose points between now and the games."



Sprinters Rhoda Njobvu (left) and Lumeka Katundu pose for a picture after their race at Heroes Stadium in Lusaka on March 20.

Picture by **CHISHIMBA BWALYA**

FAZ: Launch of National Women's League and preparation for Olympics

The football federation governing body is confident about the women's team and the rest of Zambian athletes performing well at the Olympic Games in Tokyo, Japan.

by CHISHIMBA BWALYA

THERE has been a number of football activities happening in the country; from the men's Super Division to the national team's participation in Africa Cup qualifiers, thereby making Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) one of the most active sports federations locally this year.

But that has not prevented the executive of the country's football governing body from becoming even more innovative

in terms of improving the capacity and reach of the game.

On March 21, FAZ launched the first ever women's national league with 14 clubs taking part across the country; Nkana, Lusaka Dynamos and Zesco United are but just some of them.

The first week brought out some exciting results; league favourites Green Buffaloes made light work of Zesco United away from home at Trade Fair Grounds but it was Red Arrows that recorded the biggest win of that weekend with a 4-0 victory

over Queens Academy to sit comfortably on top of the table on match-day one.

By the period of publication for this edition, three weeks of football had been played and things looked to be getting competitively exciting despite it having only been the start.

With one eye on the women's national team that will be debuting at the Olympics in Tokyo later in July, FAZ are hopeful that with the inception of such an initiative, maintaining fitness levels for players and discovering more gems to add to the team will not be a problem.

"We realised that we have a lot of untapped talent right there in the provinces and we also want to tap talent in the surrounding areas in Lusaka and we are happy that we have seen a lot of stakeholders coming to support their teams.

"This is also going to upscale the skills of our players at club level and indeed we will be able to see women players crossing borders, so far we have about four playing professional football, which is a very good sign for Zambian football.

"Our core is to strengthen our national league so that we have a competitive national team," Kashala told NOCZ Media in an interview.

And with the Tokyo Games now less than four months away, FAZ has intensified their preparations by calling the



ADRIAN Kashala
General Secretary, FAZ

women's team back into camp.

27 players have been called into camp including China based Barbara Banda for friendlies against South Africa and Kenya.

"Our preparations start now. We have organised a number of friendlies, we have two crucial games that we want our team to play and then we can see how we can organise other tournaments."

Copper Queens' appearance at the Games this year will mark 33 years since the country's last football participation with the

men's side in 1988.

But FAZ are optimistic about the team's chances of living up to the quarterfinal efforts of the

"Our core is to strengthen our national league so that we have a competitive national team... Our preparations start now... I think we have a team that can compete if properly managed"

former legendary side but would like to see more support from the corporate world.

"I think we have a team that can compete if properly

managed, it also calls for other stakeholders out there. We would want to call on other stakeholders to invest in this

team that is carrying the national flag," Kashala said.

Kashala also expressed confidence that all athletes that have qualified from Zambia have what it takes to perform well and win a medal for the country.

"We are not saying one of them but all of them because we know that for them to qualify they competed at a very high level against other highly rated



Lusaka Dynamos ladies midfielder Ruth Ndala (white) tries to block Nkwazi Queens striker Dorothy Daka. Dynamos won 2-0.

Rugby rolls back into action

by CHISHIMBA BWALYA

AFTER almost a year in hiatus as a result of coronavirus, rugby finally made its highly anticipated return on the local turf on the Saturday of March 20.

Going by the turn out at Lusaka's Showgrounds Arena, it was easy to note that enthusiasts of the sport had missed its action as they flocked in and filled the terraces.

Lusaka Powerhouse's win over Green Eagles with a tightly contested 18-10 victory provided the highlight of the traditional friendly matches which are the curtain raisers of the league campaign but Red Arrows also provided their own spectacle by demolishing Nkwazi 42-7 in the men's matches.

The women ruggers also played earlier on the same day. Like the men's side, Red Arrows women followed suit by thrashing Green Eagles 21-7.

With professional rugby having been off since March last year, the turn out this year from lovers



LUSAKA Powerhouse (white) in action against Green Eagles at Lusaka Showgrounds Arena. Powerhouse won 18-10.

Picture by CHISHIMBA BWALYA

of the game was definitely something that seemed to have elated the Zambia Rugby Union executive, who, through President Clement Sinkamba (Gen.) noted with pleasure.

"We all quite happy to see the game come back, you can literally see that a number of our supporters and players have been missing the game for quite some time.

"The whole of last year we didn't play so going forward at least we are lucky that we have

been allowed just like most of the countries in the region have also started their games."

"I hope going forward we won't have to stop because of COVID-19 situation."

Arguably, the sport had been one of worst hit in the country due to the pandemic situation but General Sinkamba expressed confidence that the clubs had prepared themselves adequately going into the season although he noted that fitness levels of players could be one of the issues that would be a problem.

All things considered, the action from the clubs on that day was just meant to be a final checkup on fitness levels before the final showdown itself would begin the following week.

In the opening weekend, Kitwe Playing Fields (KPF) trounced Powerhouse 22-06 to post the biggest win of match-week one while Roan were not so far behind with their 19-10 trample of Konkola.



GEN. SINKAMBA

Commemorating Commonwealth Day

CGA- Zambia celebrates innovately under new normal

by CHISHIMBA BWALYA

THIS year's Commonwealth Day celebrations were different but successful.

Notably, the celebrations were held at OYDC – Sports Development Centre with a capacity of only 13 participants owing to observance of coronavirus restrictions.

As compared to events from years past, the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic meant there was no possibility of having full packed physical gatherings.

But they say necessity is the mother of all inventions, hence the challenges at hand called for innovations and that is how the essay writing competition was introduced to get people involved without really endangering their lives.

There was decent feedback from young people especially, as was intended, not only countrywide but also from Asian countries who took part in the competition.

Although there was a prize attached, the purpose really was to spur innovative thinking around development from youths and in that regard, there were plenty of ideas brought forward.

Angela Halubobya, 23, from the University of Zambia (UNZA) scooped first place ahead of Milupi Njekwa from Birmingham University and Christine Phiri of Eden University respectively.

She walked away with a K1000 while the two settled for K750 and K500 in second and third positions. All three also received top up prizes from Gaia Zambia who provided assorted toiletry products.

The commemorations fell on the same day as International Women's Day and for Commonwealth Games Association of Zambia (CGA - Zambia) President Alfred Foloko, there was not a more opportune moment to re-emphasise his administration's commitment to the support of women in sport in the country.

“As CGA-Zambia we are very

happy to be celebrating the Commonwealth Day and of course the International Women's Day with the rest of the world.

“As an executive, we are cognizant of the role played by women in our society and it is for this reason that even our amended constitution allows 30 percent of positions to be specifically allocated to women in line with the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA),” he said in his speech.

The day was celebrated under the theme “Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating and Transforming.”

There was a virtual interview lined-up as well with CGA-Zambia vice-President Ms Mirriam Moyo who also holds the same position on global level for the African region.

In the interview Ms Moyo shared her time with the Commonwealth and Zambia has developed to a point that the presence of women in sports has become a norm.



CGA-ZAMBIA President Alfred Foloko (in suit, front row) and Secretary General Boniface Kambikambi (front row, left) pose for a picture with Secretariat and essay writing competition winners and their parents.

Picture by FELIX MUNYIKA

2020 Olympafrica Futbolnet Special Edition

by **FELIX MUNYIKA**

THE 2020 Olympafrica Futbolnet Cup concluded on March 11, under the revised special edition held at the Olympafrica Centre in Lusaka, Zambia.

After 4-weeks Futbolnet sessions in the YAMATO Playing fields which attracted over 2,000 participants during the month-long period, the National Olympic Committee of Zambia (NOCZ) Executive Board Member and Treasurer Mr Victor Banda accompanied by NOCZ Administration Officer Mrs Gloria M. Khondowe and Olympafrica Centre Programmes Officer Mrs. Tinyiko L.K Noombo officiated at the closing ceremony.

100 children from various schools participated in the grand finale, which included activities such as technical sessions in football and basketball, sessions on Olympic Values and fun games.

Because of the current COVID 19 situation, the 2020 edition of the Futbolnet Cup was a special edition that involved newly developed activity guidelines to help children on and off the field of play.

Pupils from Barren, Kings Academy, Mandevu LCC, Chipata Overspill, and Mutambe primary schools participated in the special edition in addition to children who are part of the sports codes at the centre namely Football, Athletics, Cricket, Volleyball, Netball, Hockey,

Taekwondo, Table Tennis and Basketball.

The Futbolnet Cup is a project of the FC Barcelona Foundation in partnership with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and OlympAfrica International Foundation which uses football as a tool to teach children good values such as teamwork, respect, hardwork and commitment.

The tournament is held every year and 39 countries take part with Zambia, Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles and Zimbabwe making up the southern African region.

The Olympafrica Centre in Lusaka is located in the Chipata Mandevu area and is home to 9 sports disciplines, namely Taekwondo, Football, Basketball, Boxing, Volleyball, Cricket, Hockey, Athletics and Teqball.

Japanese delegation visit's NOCZ



by **FELIX MUNYIKA**

PRESIDENT and Secretary General of the National Olympic Committee of Zambia (NOCZ), Mr Alfred Foloko and Mr Boniface Kambikambi, welcomed two officials from the Embassy of Japan in Zambia, Ms Arai Wakana (First Secretary) and Mr Iwamura Naoki (Second Secretary), in a special visit at the NOC Secretariat on 30 March 2021. The meeting took place in the framework of both parties updating each other regarding

preparations for upcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

NOCZ President acknowledged the good work and efforts the Japanese Government is putting in place ahead of Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

The Japanese delegation used the opportunity to familiarize with NOCZ as they recently got accredited to Zambia and also offered solidarity in assuring the country that the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games will go on well. Team Zambia is set to use the training facilities in Japan's

Asahi City in the run up to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games after signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the city in 2020 before the games were postponed due to COVID 19.

The MoU was signed by the NOCZ President Mr. Alfred Foloko in December of 2019, while Asahi Mayor Mr. Tadanao Akechi signed it in January 2020. Zambian Ambassador to Japan Ndiyoi Muliwana Mutiti witnessed the signing ceremony in Asahi.

FROM L-R: NOCZ President Alfred Foloko, Japanese Embassy Second Secretary Iwamura Naoki, First Secretary Arai Wakana and NOCZ Secretary General Boniface Kambikambi. Picture by FELIX MUNYIKA

ZAMBIAN SPORTS FUN FACTS



OLYMPIC STADIUM, TOKYO; During the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games held in this stadium on October 24, 1964, Zambia gained her independence from British rule and changed her name from Northern Rhodesia. The Stadium will host the opening ceremony of the forthcoming games.



THE LUCKY SHOES; Olympian Samuel Matete wore this shoe at the 1996 Games in Atlanta as he won the Silver medal in 400 metres hurdles. They are exhibited at OYDC.

- **Zambia has competed in 8 sporting disciplines at the Olympic Games (Athletics, Badminton, Boxing, Fencing, Football, Judo, Swimming and Wrestling).**
- **Sprinter Prince Mumba** holds the record for most appearances at the African Games (4); 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011.
- **Boxing** holds the record for most medals won by Zambia at the Commonwealth Games (25).
- **Rachel Nachula** is the first Zambian athlete to qualify for the Olympics in different sports discipline.
2008: Athletics 2020: Football

PAST EVENTS IN PICTURES



FROM L-R: Essay writing competition participants Christine Phiri, Angela Halubobya, Wilson Nkoma and Judith Phiri pose for a group photo after receiving certificates on Commonwealth Day.

Picture by FELIX MUNYIKA



Prudence N Hachitapika
Newly appointed Safe Sport
Officer, NOCZ

Gloria M Khondowe
Newly appointed Administration
Officer, NOCZ

GAZE ON RECORD: Sprinter Rhoda Njobvu takes a look at her record time after qualifying for the Olympics at Heroes Stadium in Lusaka on March 20.

Picture by CHISHIMBA BWALYA

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Felix Munyika - Writing & Photography

Chishimba Bwalya - Layout Design & Editing



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