



VSA Newsletter

Recent news and activities

2021



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FOREWORD

Anthony Mokoena



It fills me with pride that our Media Director, Jacob Thamaga has gone the extra few kilometres in producing an exciting publication that will be a vehicle to inform our membership and the public, inter alia, of VSA's ongoing activities.

My congratulations go to Jacob.

I am excited that our membership can look forward to interesting times afforded by the newsletter's coverage

of all the latest and topical happenings in the world of volleyball. How-ever the focus in the newsletter will be on local content.

The Media Director has assured me that team and individual profiles from around the country will be given adequate space in the publication. These initiatives will give our emerging talent the media space to eventually become household names in their respective communities.

While the opportunities exist for such coverage, interested teams and individuals must avail themselves to take up the offer by contacting the Media Director or our Communications Commission to set up interviews and photo shoots for our "state of the art" newsletter.

Through this medium I am making an appeal to our affiliates, both provincial and associate members to provide opinion pieces and relevant articles on activities such as development courses, administration workshops, schools volleyball, competitions, league match reports, team and player profiles for possible submission in our newsletter.

Do be mindful that the successful continuation of this publication is dependent on our collective responsibilities of providing for our membership.

Enjoy the reading and be amazed with the exciting colour photographs of our local talent.

Stay Safe.

VSA PRESIDENT

ANTHONY KAMOHELO MOKOENA

CAVB APPOINTS ANTHONY MOKOENA, THE PRESIDENT OF VOLLEYBALL SOUTH AFRICA AS A MEMBER OF THE CAVB DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

CAVB held its board meeting on the 20th of August 2021 in which one of the important agenda items was to appoint members who will be in charge of various CAVB Commissions during the 2021 – 2024 cycle. It was sensational news to the South African Volleyball after it was announced that the President of Volleyball South Africa, Mr. Anthony Mokoena was amongst the appointed members whom will serve in the CAVB Commissions.

Although, the announcement did not come as a surprise to many since it was his long term service in Volleyball South Africa which earned him this opportunity to be a member of the CAVB Development Commission. Mokoena is perceived as a noticeable expert and a decorated coach, manager and volleyball administrator of note. Apart from the long service acknowledgment, Mokoena was considered to be the best choice, amongst other things he was boosted by the fact that he is occupying the highest position in the Zone 6 Executive committee, he was voted uncontested in November 2020 as the Vice President.

Mokoena's prowess with regard to volleyball development emerged between 1998-2001 when he was appointed as the Development Director of Free State Volleyball Union. However, his ever national leadership spell was between 2001 - 2015 when he was voted in as the Development Director of Volleyball South Africa.

President Mokoena with great excitement expressed that, he feels very honored for this appointment since it has been his passion and a goal to be involved in volleyball development. "I am honored to be part of men and women whom their common goal is to develop volleyball in the entire African Continent", said Mokoena. "Both VSA and Zone 6 will benefit evocatively since my responsibility will be to initiate development projects from South Africa and to escalate them to the Zonal and eventually to the whole African Continent" Mokoena added. He further stipulated that it is a great achievement for him personally and he thanks Volleyball South Africa for the role played in affording him an opportunity to make it to that stage.



VSA President Anthony Mokoena appointed as a member of the CAVB Development Commission.

In relation to Mokoena's development agenda in the context of South African Volleyball, President Mokoena announced earlier this year at the VSA QGM that he dedicates this year as "the year of developing and capacitating women referees in South Africa". Mokoena also pronounced that he will launch the Presidential Development Programme on which several townships without volleyball activities will be targeted in terms of introduction of volleyball and the targeted townships will also be supported with volleyball equipment.

LIMPOPO VOLLEYBALL SUCCESSFULLY HELD ITS OPENING TOURNAMENT

Limpopo Volleyball held a successful tournament on the 15 May 2021 at Polokwane, Peter Mokaba Outdoor Courts. The tourney of its own was attended by 26 mens' teams and 15 womens' teams, which made a grant total of 41 teams. The teams which graced the events were from all the 5 Districts of Limpopo Province namely; Sekhukhune, Mopani, Capricorn, Vhembe and Waterberg. The President of Limpopo Volleyball, Mr. Atang Segodi was pleased by attendance of teams since Limpopo has never experienced such a massive attendance in their history of volleyball tourneys. While on the other hand, Capricorn District Volleyball and Vhembe District Volleyball respectively started with astonishing build-up tournaments before the initial provincial event.

The VSA PR & Media Director, Mr. Jacob Thamaga conversed with the President of Limpopo Volleyball President, Mr. Atang Segodi and this is how the conversation unfolded:

1. How did the COVID-19 lockdown affect your programmes?

President Atang indicated that Covid-19 lockdown restrictions impacted on their programmes negatively since they had planned to host provincial leagues every month but that had to be postponed.

Atang also stressed that the Limpopo Volleyball was supposed to host a fundraising tournament but due to the Level 4 Lockdown restrictions, the tournament could not go ahead.

"We were supposed to host a coaching and refereeing clinics of which they were also postponed", Atang added.

2. What can be expected from Limpopo Volleyball since the restrictions were eased and Volleyball is allowed to play?

Atang confidently alluded that the Province is glad about the announcement from the volleyball President that volleyball activities can resume. "We therefore called upon our districts to continue with their leagues or tournaments", said President Atang. He was excited that the Province amongst others will also resume with its league and eventually host Inter-District Tournaments. If time allows we will also check if we can still host the coaching and refereeing clinics", the President Atang Segodi emphasised.

Above all, Limpopo Volleyball was regarded as one of the competitive provinces within the SA Volleyball. The Province had attained several accolades in the past during the IPTs, NVL and VSA Championships. The question is, will Limpopo Volleyball still accomplish the same accolades at the national competitions?



MPUMALANGA VOLLEYBALL PROVINCIAL FEDERATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONCLUDED ITS PROGRAM OF RELAUNCHING ITS DISTRICTS STRUCTURES



The MP Volleyball Federation Executive Committee has done a tremendous job in terms of reviving its districts volleyball structures. The Province held its Provincial Annual General Meeting (AGM) on the 20th of March 2021 wherein the current executive was elected and mandated to relaunch all the district structures in Mpumalanga.

The elected committee speedily hit the ground and revived the district structures in all the three districts.

Sbusiso Dube, the President of MP Volleyball Federation expressed himself with excitement that, the EXCO has done fairly well since they have successfully launched all the three (3) districts namely; Nkangala, Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni districts. The districts were launched and given clear instructions to initiate volleyball development programmes at grassroots level.

Apart from the formation of district structures, MP Volleyball also held a successful opening tournament which attracted most of the teams within the province. We were overwhelmed by the attendance of teams, and players also displayed great volleyball performance on the day, said Dube. Both players and administrators demonstrated that they really missed volleyball actions, Dube added.

The Volleyball South Africa's PR & Media Director, Jacob Thamaga had a conversation with Sbusiso Dube, the MP Volleyball President and below see how the chat unfolded:

1

How did COVID-19 affect your volleyball activities?

The President Dube indicated that they were negatively affected by COVID-19 and he raised four (4) points that he deemed as key to what was experienced:

- COVID-19 impacted negatively since the government kept on introducing hard lockdowns restrictions. Therefore, due to the lockdown restrictions our teams were not able to take part in volleyball activities.
- Our provincial and district leagues were on hold at some point due to the above-mentioned hard lockdown rules and regulations.
- Potential sponsors also indicated that they are no longer in a good state to fund volleyball activities since their finances in their respective businesses were negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Teams are no longer competing for prize money mainly because no one is willing to invest in volleyball activities due to the decline in terms of economy.

2

Lockdown regulations are eased, what can we expect from MP Volleyball?

Dube alluded that, MP Volleyball has begun with teams and players' registration process and we were waiting for lockdown levels to allow sports participation so that we can resume with the provincial volleyball league games.

In his conclusion, Dube highlighted that the fact that MP Volleyball is eagerly waiting to take part in the 2021 national based competitions since 2020 was a dry season in terms of national based competitions. MP is also aiming to improve their position at the National Volleyball League.





NORTH WEST VOLLEYBALL UNION CLAIMS TO BE READY FOR VSA COMPETITIONS

After several attempts to build their name at the VSA domestic competitions, the newly elected President of North West Volleyball Union, Mr. Obakeng Molebalwa pronounces that North West is ready to lock horns against their rivals in the upcoming National Volleyball League (NVL) and the IPTs.

President Molebalwa accepts the fact that the North West Volleyball teams were not counted among the best teams during the previous National Volleyball Leagues and at the IPTs, however, he confidently articulated that, the thing of undermining NW Volleyball will be a thing of the past in the long run. Molebalwa stated that to have a competitive provincial team it's a work in progress and they are hard at work to ensure that they prepare their teams way in advance for the national competitions. "The Province held the first training camp for boys U/23 on the 27 March 2021 with a view of assessing the talent available in the province and further preparing for future activities like IPT's and the NVL", said Molebalwa. We also planned to host more of those training camps which include girls U/23, however, the programme was disrupted by COVID-19 Lockdown, Molebalwa added.

In the same vein, the Provincial Coach Mr. Tshepo Moloto expressed that, the purpose of their training camps is to prepare U/21 Provincial players for U/23 competitions and for other senior competitions such as NVL and IPTs. "The technical team wants to continue grooming the young stars and prepare them for future events as they are the future of the province", said Moloto. I am gunning for more training camps of this nature and friendly games will be arranged to allow the team to gel and play as a unit, Moloto alluded.

Apart from the aforementioned initiatives, President Molebalwa indicated that they have hosted several competitions and they have encouraged districts to stage more competitions at district level which will contribute in terms of growing volleyball in North West. Molebalwa believes more competitions will help the province to identify potential players to be selected for Provincial Teams. The Executive under President Molebalwa started on a high note, however the question is will NW Volleyball indeed make it to the stage in the upcoming National Volleyball Competitions?



MY DREAM TO PLAY AT THE OLYMPICS IS NOT OVER: MTHOKOZISI MNDINGI

Mthokozisi Mdingi, a young star who hails from Kwa-Zulu Natal believes he still stands a chance to represent South Africa at the Olympics. Mthokozisi, a 27 years' brilliant player was part of the SA Beach Volleyball team which failed to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics. Mthokozisi the left sided player was paired with Leo Williams at the African Continental Cup Qualifiers which were held in Morocco on the 21-27 June 2021. Even though Mthoko and his fellow teammates did not qualify for Tokyo Olympics, he indicated that throwing in the towel was not his option. "I want to go back to the drawing board and improve my skill and also ensure that I stay committed and disciplined so that I can be invited to the national teams" said Mthoko. "I wish I can get a sponsor who will help me tour the world to play at the FIVB Tours so that I can improve my game", Mthoko added.



Volleyball South Africa's PR & Media Director, Jacob Thamaga asked him few questions with regard to the Olympic Qualifiers and this is how he responded:

1. You were part of the SA team which participated at the Olympic Qualifiers. How did you feel about the team announcement?

It was very surprising and an honour receiving the letter stating that I finally made it into the National Team.

2. You competed at the Olympic Qualifiers which were staged in Morocco. What was your experience?

"It was a great experience with a group of experienced players which, once again, I was honoured to be a part of".

3. The team unfortunately did not qualify for the Tokyo Olympics. How did you feel after failing to qualify?

"It was really hard not to take those moments to heart as I saw my whole life/dream coming to a dead end. But at the end of the day, I just had to accept that the other countries were more prepared than us, so more work just needed to be done".

4. What are your future plans when it comes to Volleyball? Can we see you bouncing back stronger than you performed?

"Only time will tell as I still have to pick up the pieces and it will also depend on the beach tournaments that the country will host. In the meantime, I will still be active and I will hopefully come back stronger".

Mthokozisi Mdingi's Volleyball Career Highlights

Mthoko started playing indoor volleyball nine years ago at the High School called Tongaat. He further joined Vaal University of Technology (VUT) where he was able to play a competitive volleyball such as USSA Championships, VSA Club Champs and VSA Beach Volleyball Tourneys.



INDOOR VOLLEYBALL ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2012 – He attained the Best Attacker Award at the IPTs
- 2013 – He acquired the Best Defender and Most Valuable Player (MVP) Awards at the University Sport South Africa (USSA) Championships
- 2013 – He was selected for Volleyball South Africa's U/23 Team
- 2018 - He was selected for the University Sport South Africa (USSA) National team

BEACH VOLLEYBALL HIGHLIGHTS

- 2016 – He won Gold at the U/23 National Splash Tournament
- 2017 – He secured the Gold medal at the University Sport South Africa (USSA) Beach Volleyball Championships
- 2017 – He was awarded Most Valuable Player of the Tournament at the USSA Beach Volleyball Championships
- 2018 – He finished on 3rd position at the USSA Beach Volleyball Championships
- 2018 – He was awarded the Best Defender at the USSA Volleyball Championships
- 2018 – He scored 2nd position at the National Volleyball League (Beach Volleyball)
- 2019 – He recorded 2nd place at the USSA Championships Beach Volleyball Championships
- 2019- He was awarded the Best Setter and the Most Valuable Player at the USSA Beach Volleyball Championships

INTERNATIONAL APPEARANCE

- 2018 – participated at the FIVB World Tour 1 Star events (Manila Open and Bangkok Open).
- 2018 – participated at the World Students Games which were held at Germany, Munich

GAUTENG VOLLEYBALL UNION ELECTED NEW EXECUTIVE



The Gauteng Volleyball Union (GVU) has finally elected its new executive committee at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) which was held on the 31 July 2021 at Johannesburg, Gauteng Sports Confederation Offices. The AGM was attended by the GVU Interim Committee and delegates from all the five regions of Gauteng; Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg, Tshwane, Sedibeng and West Rand. The AGM was chaired by the VSA Vice President, Mr. Mike Makhubela, who is also deployed as a Mentor for Gauteng Volleyball Union. Mr. Makhubela and the Gauteng Sports Confederation representative were also tasked with the responsibilities of ensuring that the AGM proceedings unfold well and to ensure that there were free and fair elections.

According to Mr. Quinton Mpepele, the GVU Media & PR Director who released a media statement informing the public and volleyball followers in Gauteng, indicated that the GVU AGM went well. "We are pleased to inform the public and volleyball followers that the GVU AGM proceedings were a success and the following members were democratically elected to lead Gauteng Volleyball Union for the next four (4) years: Jacob Thamaga (President), Mathews Govender (Vice President), Kooko Letele (General Secretary), Shalldrack Maitisa (Treasurer), Uzubenathi Ntumbu (Competition Director), Andries Kekana (Development Director), Sifiso Vilakazi (Schools Volleyball Director), Quinton Mpepele (Media & PR Director), GP Fourie (Technical Director), Palesa Masinga (Beach Director), Lesego Molefe (Transformation, Ethics and Gender Director).

The newly elected President, Mr. Jacob Thamaga was quoted in his acceptance address thanking the Interim Committee that worked tirelessly to ensure that GVU effectively operated and achieved best results at the previous NVL even under difficult circumstances. Jacob further stated that; "As you are aware, GVU has been under administration for a long time and it is now time to move forward positively". There were differences in opinion for leadership towards this AGM, however, there is one winner in Volleyball, said the elected President Jacob Thamaga. Mpepele also quoted the President expressing the fact that there are few tasks which are deemed to be critical for the Union and which requires urgent attention such as: to fix the GVU governance affairs, to unite GVU and all its structures, to relaunch regions, establish the GVU league, ensure that districts launch development leagues, establish commissions, run coaches, administration and referees' courses, introduce programmes to capacitate women in all the areas of GVU, and to ensure that GVU clubs and players do compete at the national competitions and ultimately qualify to represent SA at the Zonal Championships.

While the GVU Executive was still trying to re-establish itself, the executive received a bombshell from two of its members who resigned few weeks after the elections. However, the resignations of EXCO members didn't really impact negatively to the remaining members. Mr. Kooko Letele, the General Secretary of GVU, when he was asked if the GVU EXCO will manage to prosper with the tasks at hand without the other members, he responded confidently by saying; "I am disappointed that two of our members have resigned however, I am certain that the remaining executive will be able to fix GVU's current challenges. Kooko further alluded that the EXCO has decided to co-opt other members whom will be introduced in due time. "Apart from those who have resigned we still have experienced men and women in our EXCO whom are bringing a vast experience. You know some EXCO members were national players before, some are still in key positions in USSA National Volleyball, while some are in various structures such as Regional Sport Confederations, meanwhile some have been in volleyball for decades as coaches and administrators", said Kooko.



The task at hand seems to be too much for GVU Executive and one may wonder if the EXCO under the leadership of this youngest President will be able to achieve all the aforementioned objectives?

GIOVANNI BAKE OFFICIATED AT THE TOKYO OLYMPICS



Giovanni Bake, the South African's highly experienced Beach Volleyball referee was appointed to officiate at the 2020 Olympics which were held in Japan, Tokyo on the 23rd of July to 8th of August 2021. Giovanni, the Capetonian was the only referee who officiated at the Olympic Games from the whole of the African Continent.

Giovanni's prowess of international refereeing began in 2011 and he started appearing in several international games. "I have been an international referee since 2011 and since then I have been travelling all over the world officiating international games such as World Championships, Common Wealth Games and African Continental Games", said Giovanni.

His greatest highlight at the Tokyo Olympics was when he was given an opportunity to officiate the Beach Volleyball Women's semifinals match between Australia and Latvia. It was not a disbelief news when he was announced to be one of the Olympics referees since it was not his 1st appearance at that prestigious competition since he also officiated at the 2016 Rio Olympics Games.

When he was asked about the differences between the 2016 Rio Olympics and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. This is how he responded:

"The fundamental difference between the 2016 Rio Olympics and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics is that when I first walked in the 2016 Rio Olympics there were 12 000 people cheering, making an amazing noise and creating an amazing atmosphere. Therefore, the supporters' vibe was missed and there was no families and fans to support athletes and all the participants at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics which was really sad", Giovanni expressed emotionally. "There were only empty chairs at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics which was something which was never anticipated and that is the most difference between the Rio Olympics and the Tokyo Olympics", Giovanni added.

When he asked about how he felt to see South Africa not participating in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. His response was as follows:

It was a huge disappointment to see my country not competing at the Olympics but that is not a surprise since the African Beach Volleyball have improved a lot in the previous years, said Giovanni. He further explained that the African Countries realized that the best way to get team representation at the Olympics without spending a lot of money is through Beach Volleyball hence their focus is now in Beach Volleyball. "The African countries have invested in their Beach teams and they put necessary programmes and adequate resources in place that Volleyball South Africa has not done," Giovanni alluded. However, he believes that South Africa can qualify in future if the preparations for the upcoming Olympics can start now and have a proper programme for the team.

Apart from refereeing at the Olympics, Giovanni is also a referee coach of the African Continent and his responsibility is to teach other developing referees especially those who did not get the same opportunities as he received. Giovanni's name recently trended in the South Africa and the continent at large as he was appointed as the member of the CAVB Refereeing Commission for the 2021-2024 cycle. That was a great appointment for him and it is likely to impact in terms of improving the refereeing status of South African Volleyball.

THE VSA PRESIDENT, MR. ANTHONY MOKOENA VISITED HEIDEDAL CHILD AND YOUTH CARE CENTRE TO SPEND HIS 67 MINUTES IN HONOUR FOR MANDELA DAY

The Volleyball South Africa's President, Mr. Anthony Mokoena had spent his 67 minutes of the 18th July 2021 at the Heidedal Child and Youth Care Centre in the Free State as part of International Mandela Day Celebration. Mokoena dedicated his time to the Centre to introduce Volleyball and to hand over nets and balls to the kids. Mokoena was joined by Mr. Edward Saunderson, the 1st Vice President of Mangaung Metro Volleyball and Lehlohonolo Maduna, the SG of Mangaung Metro Volleyball and they were well received by Mrs. Stoffel, the Matron of Heidedal Youth child and Care Centre.

Today is a great day for our country and the whole world and we are encouraged to take action and make a difference as part of celebrating the life of the Former President Nelson Mandela who sacrificed his entire life for the people of South Africa", said Mokoena.

He further indicated that as the President of Volleyball South Africa, he saw a need to visit the Centre which has around 52 kids and spend his 67 minutes introducing volleyball to the Centre. "I was overwhelmed to see tall boys and girls who have potential to become great players in the near future," Mokoena added. President Mokoena further assured the Matron that he will keep on visiting the Centre to monitor the development progress of those players and he will adopt them to be part of his development programme.



VOLLEYBALL SOUTH AFRICA CONCLUDED ITS LEVEL 1 COACHING COURSE FOR MEN

Volleyball South Africa concluded its Level 1 Coaching Course which took place on the 27th -29th of August 2021 in Bloemfontein. The remarkable practical course was a continuation of the theory component of the course which took place virtually on the 16th -19th of August 2021. The course was blessed by 16 participants from various provinces in South Africa and it was facilitated by Mr. Loet Groenewald, who is the VSA Technical Director and a highly experienced and accredited instructor.

The coaches were well received in a special and grand opening event which was also blessed by the President of Volleyball South Africa and the President of Free State Volleyball. President Mokoena when delivering a welcome address indicated that he was delighted and thankful to the coaches and special guests for they have taken time off their busy schedules to grace the VSA's coaching course. "My compliments go to the prospective coaches for their interest to improve their coaching skills through this course which began via a 4-day theory course held virtually and it ends here in Bloemfontein with its practical component", said Mokoena. He further indicated that VSA is currently applying to host the FIVB level 1 coaching course in 2022 and he is certain that the coaches who attended the VSA level 1 course will qualify to attend the FIVB level 1 course. "I wish you well in the course and I hope to see you as coaches of your provincial teams and in the near future coaching one of our national teams," Mokoena added.



Meanwhile, the President of Free State Volleyball, Mr. Bongani Chabalala when rendering the message of support at the opening ceremony stated that "no amount of words can express Free State Volleyball Association's gratefulness to VSA who saw it fit to host this course in the Free State Province". "Your contribution to Volleyball development is like the rain which the farmers will always pray for to nourish the seeds they have planted" Bongani stipulated. "I am confident that the Almighty is happy to see the newly elected executive of VSA using their knowledge, strength, and dedication to empower our volleyball communities. Continue to be the agents of development, change and social cohesion", Chabalala praised the VSA President and his executive.

While on the other hand the man of the moment Mr. Loet Groenewald, the VSA Technical Director was happy on how the VSA coaching course has unfolded. "I am very delighted with how the training course unfolded since the attendance was overwhelming and we really trained a bunch of great coaches", said Loet Groenewald. The coaches behaved well during the entire proceedings of the course and they all performed with distinctions and that is great news for our federation" Loet added. Even though coaches performed as expected it doesn't mean it is the end of the world for them, they are expected to present the portfolio of evidence before they can be awarded their certificates, Loet alluded. Most importantly, Loet also commended the Free State Volleyball for their hospitality and courtesy. Loet further expressed that he will not be doing justice not to acknowledge and thank Mrs. Kido Mokoena for the role played as the assistant to the instructor during the course.

Mr. Kooko Letele from Gauteng, as one of the participants was excited with how the course was facilitated and he stressed that he really learned a lot from the course. "You know I learned a lot from that course and I am willing to transfer the knowledge accumulated to my club, district and my province at large" said Kooko.

The next VSA level 1 coaching course for women will take place around October 2021 in Gauteng.





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