



REPORT OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT JANUARY – MARCH 2006

The main function of this department is to process the daily requests for international transfer certificates, attends to the registrations of players, coordinates the CAF Inter-clubs Competitions and communication between the Association and its sister associations in FIFA.

MTN/CAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2006

This is the premier club championship in Africa which commenced in 1997. The 8 teams who are knocked out from the last 16 stage of the Champions League will be integrated into the Confederations Cup and will play, in a direct elimination round after the drawing of lots, against the last eight in the Confederations Cup.

Two of our football teams are representing South Africa in the MTN/CAF Champions League 2006, i.e. Orlando Pirates and Mamelodi Sundowns Football Club. Due to financial constraints, Supersport United FC withdrew its participation from the Confederations Cup.

Attendance at these matches is very poor and is a grave cause of concern. The Association coordinates these matches. A series of meetings with the teams and the League have been held to clarify the role of the Association as well the obligations of the teams in this Competition. The teams are responsible for the marketing, promotions, ticketing and television negotiations.

OUR TEAMS' PERFORMANCE IN THE MTN/CAF CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2006

TEAM I	TEAM II	VENUE	DATE	SCORE
Mbabane Swallows (Swaziland)	Orlando Pirates	SWAZILAND	19 Feb.	0 – 5
FC Likhopo(Lesotho)	Mamelodi Sundowns	MASERU	19 Feb.	0 – 1

Orlando Pirates	Mbabane Swallows (Swaziland)	NELSPRUIT	4 March	2 – 2
Mamelodi Sundowns	FC Likhopo (Lesotho)	PRETORIA	5 March	3 – 0
ASPL2000 (Mauritius)	Orlando Pirates	MAURITIUS	19 Mar	0 – 5
USCAFOOT (Malagasy)	Mamelodi Sundowns	MADAGASCAR	19 Mar	1 – 1
Orlando Pirates	ASPL2000 (Mauritius)	JOHANNESBURG	1 April	
Mamelodi Sundowns	USCAFOOT (Malagasy)	PRETORIA	2 April	

PLAYERS AGENTS

There is a great interest in this aspect. We have received more than 400 applications between the months of January and March 2006.

The Association will conduct the FIFA Players Agents Examination on 30 March 2006 at the Presidential Suite, FNB Stadium at 11h00. Only two candidates will sit for this Examination.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSFER OF PLAYERS

There has been significant growth in the number of South African players who are plying their trade in European countries.

REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

In previous years our window period for the transfer and registration of players was in February. Last year the PSL Management changed this period to 31 December 2005 to accommodate the African Cup of Nations Tournament which took place during the month of February 2006.

MUSASA KABAMBA/TEMBISA CLASSIC FC (TURKISH FA)

On 16 February 2006 we received registration documents from the League and the Association thereafter applied for an ITC from the Turkish FA. An ITC was issued and we were advised by the Turkish FA that the player's contract expired on 1 February 2006.

On 19 February 2006, a letter was addressed to the League advising that in view of the fact that the window period for transfer/registration of players closed on 31 December 2005, the said player did not qualify to be registered with Tembisa Classic FC.

The said player instituted legal proceedings against the League, SAFA and the Turkish FA. On 9 March 2006, the Judge in the High Court of SA granted a Court Order as follows:

- Declaring that Musasa Kabamba's contract with the Turkish Team expired on 31 December 2005;
- Declaring Musasa Kabamba to be a free agent.

On 10 March 2006, the Association requested the League to proceed with the registration of the said player on the basis of the Court Order.

On 14 March 2006, the League addressed a letter to Tembisa Classic FC instructing them not to use the player in any matches played under the auspices of SAFA or the League. This letter was based in terms of Rule Nisi which the player sought and was never granted, which states as follows:

“Declaring that the League and SAFA are entitled to register Musasa Kabamba as professional footballer eligible to play for Tembisa Classic FC”.

On 15 March 2006 an application to the High Court was made by Musasa Kabamba for urgent relief. The application was successful and the relief was handed down as follows:

“Declaring that the League and SAFA are entitled to register Musasa Kabamba as a professional footballer eligible to play for Tembisa Classic should proceed with the registration of the above said player as a professional player.”

Musasa Kabamba is now properly registered with Tembisa Classic Football Club.

SHAUN POTGIETER

This player signed a contract with Orlando Pirates FC, commencing on 10 February 2003 and terminating on 31 January 2006. This contract was terminated by the normal effluxion of time at the end of the contract period.

Shaun concluded a contract with another team within PSL but the League could not register him outside the transfer/registration window period as provided for in the FIFA and SAFA/NSL Rules and Regulations Regarding the Transfer and Registration of Players.

We received a letter from Mr. Makaab, who is representing the player, pleading with the Association to consider the following:

- That Shaun Potgieter signed the contract with his previous team in good faith and if the transfer/registration period would have remained unaltered (February), Shaun would have been able to register and play. Shaun was bound by a contract which he honoured, and he now finds himself in a precarious position because of changes in the transfer/registration period without all stakeholders being advised of such changes.

This matter was referred to FIFA Players Status for guidance and directive. FIFA's response was that it cannot intervene as this was considered as a pure internal matter. FIFA also reminded SAFA to observe the FIFA provision which is binding at national level, in accordance with which Associations are authorized to register professional players whose contracts have expired prior to the end of a registration period, outside of that established registration, in the event they have ultimately found a club to register with. SAFA should also keep vigil over the maintenance of the sporting integrity of the relevant ongoing competition.

TONY COYLE/SUPERSPORT UNITED FC (FOOTBALL UNION OF RUSSIA)

We received the registration documents and subsequently requested an ITC from the Football Union of Russia (FUR). Numerous letters were addressed to the FUR and to date no response was received. We then requested FIFA to intervene in this matter as the player was now denied the right to pursue his career as a professional player and also to earn a living. FIFA is investigating the matter and Supersports United FC has been informed of the developments herein.

CONCLUSION

I am of the opinion that no consideration and/or provisions were made when the transfer/registration window period was altered, vis-à-vis players whose contracts were expiring during the month of February. Indeed it would be ludicrous to suggest that a valid and binding contract be terminated simply to fall in line with what is essential and unique employment relations in football, as envisaged by the restrictions imposed on the freedom of employment by the prescription transfer/window periods.

PINKY LEHOKO

International Affairs Officer

