

Tuwei says award scheme way back in the 1980's

Contrary to reports that Kenyan medal winners of yore went home empty-handed, Jack Tuwei, president of Athletics Kenya confirmed that there was government document in the 1980s to the effect that gold medal winners would be awarded 300,000 shillings, silver medal winners 200,000 shillings and bronze medal winners 100,000 shillings.

Later in the 90s, Tuwei and others met with officials at the ministry of sports and agitated for better cash awards. In 2015, President Uhuru Kenyatta raised the cash awards one million shillings, 750,000 500,000 for gold, silver and bronze medals respectively in addition to all members of the contingent who received a bonus as well.

"Hassan Wario and I met Henry Rotich, cabinet secretary for Treasury in the company of comptroller of state house, but Rotich insisted that we produce a policy document for the treasury to effect the presidential directive," Tuwei said.

"Up to this day, this has not been done, hence the reason the team to the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games has not returned the flag to state house since last April because some people know that they will be asked tough questions."

Aasif Karim said there should be a stand-alone ministry of sports with a good budget and a retired sportsperson of international repute and good standing to head the institution, adding that it is almost unbelievable that more than 50 years after independence sports ministry is not a separate docket.

Larry Ngala said there is no country in the world that has developed sports using government funding.

Lack of mentorship hampers growth of sports journalism

Mentorship is key for the growth of any organisation or occupation. Kariuki Thige said a mentor is like a bridge between the old and new. He said he joined KBC in 2000 after the transition period had begun and left in 2008, where during his days at the sports desk, instead of somebody holding him by the hand for guidance, they were out to ensure that they brought him down anytime he tried to rise up.

Kenyan sportspeople need to enlist brand managers

Kenyan sportspeople who to take their game to the next level ought to enlist the services of brand managers because gone are the days when athletes did all the work on their own. David

Beckham spoke with a working class accent, but when he moved to Los Angeles to play for the LA Galaxy, his accent underwent a subtle transformation.

Research conducted about the way Beckham spoke before and after his move to the US in 2007 revealed that he nowadays speaks with a standard English accent after he dropped his earlier intonation in order to cope with his then additional role as ambassador for the 2010 London Olympics and his subsequent high social status.

Speaking during the KISFF event, veteran sports journalist, Topi Lyambila, stated sportspeople ought to address interviews in a language they are most conversant with, even if means using the services of a translator, adding that Usain Bolt increased his earning five-fold between 2008 and 2012 because of branding.

Ex-South African president Frederick de Klerk was born in Soy, Kenya

In 2003, golf correspondent Larry Ngala interviewed former South African president, Frederick de Klerk, at the sidelines of the US vs Rest of the World golf tournament, which was held in South Africa.

Four presidents; de Klerk, Nelson Mandela, George H.W. Bush and Thabo Mbeki were competing in the Presidents' Cup when it came to de Klerk's attention that Ngala was from Kenya.

The former South African leader told Ngala that his father worked at Soy Club, located between Eldoret and Kitale, and that is where he was born.

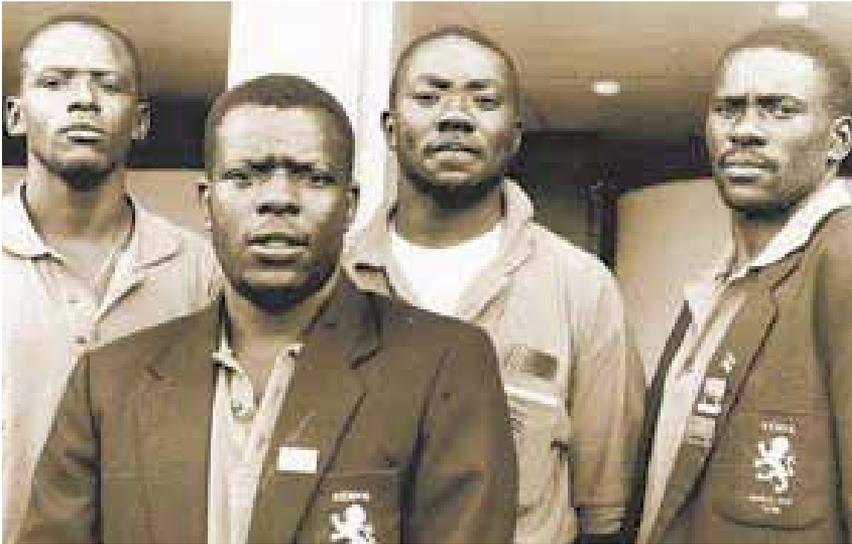
Ngala later met de Klerk for an interview about a book the Kenyan was researching on, but as fate would have it, he lost his notes when workers at Nation Centre mistook his notes for trash and burned them with other office waste.

Not one to take a defeat, Ngala embarked on another book but has been struggling for almost a year with golf clubs to give him information on the 90-year old history of Kenyan golf.

There is conflict in his research work as to who between for governor of Central Bank, Duncan Ndegwa who played the game in 1951 and the Nubians who were caddies at Royal Nairobi Golf Club in 1936, were the first Kenyans to play golf.

The Park Road Boys – How Kenyan cricket lived and died

By Carey Baraka



Two pairs of a kind (from left): Cricketers Maurice and Tito Odumbe and their team-mates and good friends Steve and David Tikolo (photo credit: Nation)

While the size of these families meant that the cricket teams would have strong rosters, it also worked the other way: bigger families meant less money to go around. Less money meant that, often, the kids had little chance of going to college, especially as their parents retired and moved back to the village. The clubs understood this and knew that the only way they could get the parents on their side was by promising to take care of school fees.

Even as the boys started playing cricket, they encountered another problem. Cricket, like many other sports, is developmental. One cannot hope to forge a successful career in the sport without taking part in youth programmes: for the under 13s, the under 15s, the under 17s. The Park Road parents could not afford to take their kids to these age-group competitions, many of which happened outside the country.

Into this void stepped the Indian parents. It was not necessarily altruism: the age-group teams had both African and Indian kids; since the Indian kids could not fill the teams on their own, without the African kids there were no teams. Now if a team had, say, nine African kids and nine Indian kids, each Indian parent would 'adopt' an African player and cover his

travel and accommodation during the tournaments. Joining Aga Khan and Swamibapa and all the other clubs was not just about the game. Most of the boys who joined these teams, and had their fees paid by the club, knew that they would not end up having professional cricket careers. However, since the people running the clubs occupied the upper strata of class in the country, they promised the kids that, after campus, they would get them jobs. Play for us, they said: here your fees are taken care of and then we'll give you jobs in the multinational companies we own and run.

Kenneth Odumbe had played cricket for Aga Khan, so, naturally, it was to them that the talents of two of his brothers, Maurice and Tito, followed, as well as the Suji family. Swamibapa, on the other hand, acquired the talents of the other Odumbes, Oriwo and Bernard, and the Tikolos – Tom, David and Steve – as well as Alfred Njuguna, Peter Ongondo, Lameck Onyango and Joseph Angara. Aga Khan Sports Club was a Muslim club, while Swamibapa was a Hindu club. Thus, in time, their matches came to be little adaptations of India vs Pakistan cricket matches. Admittedly, Swamibapa vs Aga Khan matches in the national cricket league had little of the bile that runs through India vs Pakistan games but,

on Sundays, the Park Road Boys on opposing teams did not speak to each other. Some of the allowances that they earned were dependent on wins, so even though in reality they cared little about the politics of Partition or Kashmir, they did care enough about their cricket to internalise these rivalries. Things would get so hot that Oriwo, a fast bowler, would bowl so hard at Maurice that Maurice's Aga Khan teammates would wonder whether the two were really brothers. Reflecting on those days, Ongondo says, "We had grown up with Maurice and those Aga Khan guys, and played with them on the national team, but when it came to this match we were no longer friends."

Even as the Park Road Boys were making their mark on Kenyan cricket, within their subset there were those who were a touch above the rest. Ongondo admits this easily.

"Man, Steve and Maurice, they were a class above everybody else." Ongondo and the younger Park Road Boys would see Maurice, Steve and Tom revving into Sir Ali in their cars, loud music splitting the Sunday calm of Park Road. They would see these guys with whom they had eaten rice and wish to be like them too, especially like Steve Tikolo and Maurice Odumbe, the two finest cricketers Kenya ever produced.

The question as to which of the two was the better player is difficult to answer. Both were right-handed batters and right-arm bowlers. Both captained Kenya. Both made their One Day International (ODI) debut in February 1996, against India. Both celebrate their birthdays in June, 10 days apart, though Maurice is two years older. While Maurice had followed his older brother into the Aga Khan team and established himself as the star of the side, Steve had followed his older brother into the Swamibapa team and established himself as the star of the side.