



Attention Shifts To Okpekpe As Next Host Of Gold Label Road Race

**FROM THE ARCHIVE**

When he said, we will raise GDP, no one understood it was Gas, Diesel and Petrol

Maradona's Golden Ball Trophy At World Cup Goes For Sale  
published 25 Mins Ago  
On May 7, 2024



JUST LIBERATION NEWS

*Weekly Sports Review*

www.justliberationnews.com

Wednesday, May 8, 2024 / Vol.2 No.24 / ISSN: 3027-2165

www.justliberationnews.com

@justlibnews

Justliberationnews

@justliberationnews

Justliberationnews

**N200**

# Gangling Goal King Lives On



Why We Settled For Finidi As Super Eagles Head Coach – **NFF**



Rivers United's Empty Threats and the NPFL Board

## NFF ON FINIDI GEORGE statutory - sat speak to the issue with FANNY AMUN



**PAMODZI**  
SPORTS MARKETING  
NIGERIA LIMITED

Mercy Genesis Departs Nigeria for World Olympic Qualifiers in Turkey





# Gangling Goal King Lives On

**Goal KING:** The once upon a time football legend that served this great country Nigeria in the field of play, highly dedicated, calm, commitment to duty when in the field of play hope is given with a household name known as Rashidi Yekini was a household name for over three decades born precisely on the month of October 1963 in the AC-CIENT city of Ibadan. He was credited to about 37 goals in his 62 games appear at the national team performances. In his early playing carrier Rashidi Yekini was known to have started his club sides like UNTL FC Kaduna.

The prolific player in Rashidi Yekini remain one of the best players that has ever emerged in the Africa football community which earned him a place within the Nigeria, African and globally notices in the field of play that earned him with the prestigious award of an African footballer in 1993 including his role played in winning the 1994 Cup of Nations hosted in Tunisia.

He was not only a part of the Nigeria national team players that earned an historic performance at the



1994 FIFA world cup finals in the USA but scored a goal that was celebrated historically by calling on the name of his creature by shaking the net to the admiration of the already charged football fans

that has expected so much from him in front of goal. In front of goal I may be right to confirm that it was possible to convert every goals from his qualities ranging from his headings and use of both

foot to convert goals that may be seen as impossible at a difficult times.

The run of his successful carrier include but not limited to Africa, Europe and back home at the end of his

playing carrier with the Gate Way FC Abeokuta Ogun state. Others are shooting stars FC, Abiola Babes FC, Victorian Setubal FC, Olympeacos FC, Sporting Lyon FC, FC Zurich, Bizerte FC, Al- Shaban,

Africa Sports, Julius Berger FC with outstanding performances The sports community and football in particular still remember this great patriot in Rashidi GANGLING Yekini MON.

# Mercy Genesis Departs Nigeria for World Olympic Qualifiers in Turkey



**A**head of the last chance to book a place in the 2024 Paris Olympics, Nigeria's Mercy Genesis, (50kg), African and Commonwealth Games champion has left for Istanbul with hopes to earn a spot for the Games.

Mercy Genesis who narrowly missed out on qualification at the last African/Oceania Olympic Wrestling qualifiers in Alexandria, Egypt would be hoping to become the latest Nigerian athlete to secure Olympic qualification in Istanbul, Turkey where the World Olympic qualifiers will take place.

The multiple African champion who was accompanied by coach Akuh Purity will take to the mat on Friday against high profile wrestlers in the world that missed out in their regional windows.

Recall the qualifier in Istanbul will offer 54 Olympic quotas in all the six weight classes of the three styles.

Every weight category offers three Paris Olympic spots -- one each to the two finalists and one to the winner of the wrestle off between the two bronze medalists.

Upon her departure, the President of the Nigeria Wrestling Federation, Hon. Daniel Igali in remarks expressed optimism of securing another Olympic ticket to make it 7 Olympic slots for the Wrestling contingent to the Paris 2024 Olympics. The Bayelsa state Commissioner of sports development wished Mercy Genesis best of luck as everyone in the Wrestling Federation has high hopes of a successful Olympic qualifiers and an Olympic berth.

Promise Okotoko  
Media Assist. NWF  
07062603231





THE ENTIRE OGBONA COMMUNITY,

*Cordially request your presence  
and support towards the*

---

*Coronation  
Ceremony  
of*

**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS  
EDWARD OKHUMODE UMOLE**

*The Okpe-Ukpi (Village Head) of Ogbona,  
in Etsako Central of Edo State*

*&*

*Fundraiser for the Groundbreaking and  
Construction of An Ultra Modern  
King Palace at Ogbona*

**DATE:**  
27TH JULY, 2024

**TIME:**  
11:00AM PROMPT

**VENUE: IMHAKHENA PRIMARY SCHOOL FUGAR RD, OKOTOR QUARTER OGBONA.**

**FOR ENQUIRIES, SPONSORSHIP AND SUPPORT**  
Felix Oshiomogho - 07083255766  
Iyere Sylvester - 08132978440



# SWAN Congratulates BOT Member For Ascending Forefathers' Throne In Ekiti State

The President, Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN), Otuekong Bonny Nyong has congratulated a member of the Board of Trustees (BOT), Barr Steve Alabi on his emergence as the new king of Osi Ekiti in Ido/Osi local government area of Ekiti State.

Otuekong Nyong noted that Barr Alabi's ascension to the throne of his forefathers as the

Olosi of Osi Ekiti is in recognition of his immense contributions to the growth, de-

velopment, and progress of Osi Ekiti, Ekiti State, and humanity in general.

He disclosed that Oba Alabi, who is also a former president of SWAN, is well equipped in terms of managerial acumen, excellent disposition, and adept in administrative capabilities to lead Osi Ekiti to greater heights.

According to him, "This is indeed a moment of joy for us, a day we will never forget, a day the land of warriors and brave men has chosen to recognise our former president as the king of Osi Ekiti.

"We are proud of Oba Alabi, who has devoted his time, resource, and wherewithal to promote the greater good of Osi Ekiti through philanthropy, community service, and goodwill.

"We are confident that Oba Alabi will engender peace, progress, quality leadership, and sense of direction to the people Osi Ekiti, Ido/Osi local government area, and Ekiti State at large.

"As a first class traditional ruler, we know that he will work with other Kings and the

Ekiti State Government to bring about dividends of development and progress to the State."

The SWAN President disclosed that an official delegation would be sent from the National Secretariat to join the people of Osi Ekiti, Ido/Osi and Ekiti State during the official coronation.

Olalekan Ige  
Secretary General  
SWAN

# Why We Settled For Finidi As Super Eagles Head Coach — NFF

By Admin

The Nigeria Football Federation has revealed the reason behind its decision to appoint Finidi George head coach of the Super Eagles.

Finidi was announced as Jose Peseiro's predecessor last week.

Director of Communications, Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Ademola Olajire said the 53-year-old's impressive track record and experience of working with Peseiro made him a stand-

out choice for the job.

"I'm not a member of the Technical Committee but I can also look at a lot of positives around Finidi George." Olajire told Hotspots.

"Finidi George was not only a great football player, he has prepared himself very well and done himself no harm with the laurels he has been able to acquire in his short period as a coach.

"He had the option of remaining in Spain and taking up an appointment with a second tier club but he chose to come back to Nigeria and start

with an NPFL club.

"He started with Enyimba. In his second season, he won the league title. It is not easy to win the league title so we must praise him for that and looking at the log now, this is his third season with the team and with four matches to go he's well on the way to retaining the title.

"That is no mean feat and it shows that this is a man who knows what he's doing.

"Pertaining to the Super Eagles, he worked for twenty months as an assistant with Jose Pe-

seiro, that gives him head start over anybody. He worked closely with the team, was with the team when they qualified for the AFCON and came second at the AFCON.

"It's natural that someone of this stature, someone who has accomplished these things and who has been very close to the team gets the nod, with the fact that we have only five weeks to to very important matches."

Credit: Promptnews online

*With deep sorrow and grief in our heart,  
We regret to announce the passing of our  
Daughter, Wife, Mother, Grandmother and Sister.*

## Obsequies

**THURSDAY 9TH MAY - 5PM**  
FAREWELL MASS/WAKE KEEP  
At  
St. Mary's Parish Trans Ekulu, Enugu.

**17TH MAY - 7AM**  
Body Leaves Mount Camel Hospital,  
New Heaven Enugu To Her  
Home Town Umulumgbe.

**17TH MAY - 10:30AM**  
Requiem Mass At  
St Anthony's Parish Umulumgbe.



Late Ezinne Lolo  
**Angelina OCHEOHA**  
(Nee Awoke)  
1955-2024









# Sliding Tackles: Finidi's Appointment: NFF's "Revenge" Against The Nation's Rejection Of Foreign Coach!

Finally! Finally!!! Finally!!! Our "Almighty" State FA Chairmen dominated NFF Board who usurped the Administration of our Football. Have Finally after Months of needless Delays, unexplainable Dilly dallying and causing unnecessary Hypertension to Nigerians. ANOUNCED, the New Coach of the Nigeria Senior Football Men National Team (the Super Eagles). And the "Annointed Choice of our NFF Board is COACH FINIDI GEORGE, the former Assistant Coach to the Departed Immediate Foreign Coach, Jose Peseiro. Coach Finidi is also the Head Coach of two time African Club Champions and Nigeria Premier League (NPFL) Club, Enyimba FC of Aba. Whose immediate Past Chairman, Felix Anyansi is the current NFF 1st Vice President and Vice Chairman of the NFF Technical Committee. Coach Finidi's Highest Coaching Success is Winning the NPFL Title with Enyimba in the 2022/2023 season.

The "Annointed One" Coach Finidi indeed needs not much Introduction. Finidi was an integral Member of that All-conquering Super Eagles Class of 1994 that won the African Nation's Cup (AFCON) Title and Qualified the Nation to our very 1st FIFA Senior World Cup in USA 1994. Coach Finidi again was a crucial Member of that Great Super Eagles Team that was rated No. 4 in the FIFA World Rankings as well as the Best Entertaining Team in the whole World. SLIDING TACKLES use this opportunity to Congratulate Coach Finidi who is undoubtedly a Hero and Legend of Nigeria Football, on His Appointment. We wish Coach Finidi all the Best in his appointed Herculean task of giving us an affordable Super Eagles that will put smiles back to our faces after a long time since Coach Stephen Keshi did that in 2013.

SLIDING TACKLES is not in any way interested in wasting any precious time discussing Coach Finidi's ability and readiness for the Super Eagles job. No, because the Appointment of Finidi as the Coach of the Super Eagles has already been done by the State FA Chairmen dominated NFF Board and there's nothing anyone can do about it. It's a fait accompli and irreversible. The "Almighty" State FA Chairmen dominated NFF Board have spoken and their word is Law. So, patriotic Nigerians can only wish Coach Finidi well as his success is ours too.

But that Finidi is an Indigenous Coach which we clamoured for, doesn't not stop us from Torchlighting the processes that led to his Surprise Emergence from nowhere. Yes, Finidi's Appointment as the Gaffer of the Super Eagles, indeed jolted Nigerians, was the least expected and shocked Football loving Nigerians. Because, about 30 Top Coaches from all climes, Applied for the Super Eagles job via the NFF Technical Committee. After due processing of Applications which took an unwarranted long time. The NFF Technical Committee Shortlisted the Screening Exercise to 5 Coaches. And then to 3 Coaches. In both the Shortlist of 5 Coaches and 3 Coaches, Coach Finidi's Name was missing. Infact, the Only Indigenous Nigerian Coach on the Shortlists of both 5 Coaches and 3 Coaches was Coach Emmanuel Amunike. The Coach who incidentally the clear Majority of Nigerians were routing to takeover the Super Eagles Coaching job.

So, the right Question to ask is - "How Did Coach Finidi Who Was Not On The Shortlist Emerge As SUPER EAGLES COACH? Because Finidi's Surprise Appointment from the blues is like a Student who was not a Candidate to an Examination, suddenly come out Tops of an Examination, the Student was not One of the Candidates. Finidi's confounding Unexpected Appointment is just like a Gov-



ernor who came 5th in the Election, being pronounced the Winner of the Election. Because, Finidi was Dropped by the NFF Technical Committee at the Shortlist of 5 Coaches Screening Stage. And he was again not listed in the Shortlisted 3 Coaches.

So, what Forces brought Finidi back into the Super Eagles Coaching job after he has been ousted by the NFF Technical Committee that was saddled with the job to Select a Coach for the Super Eagles for the Nation? The answers to the Questions are key in resolving this jigsaw puzzle of the NFF and it's Appointment of Coach Finidi as the New Coach of our Super Eagles. The Super Eagles is the Property of Nigerians. And Nigerians deserve to be told the rationale for the Appointment of Coach Finidi who was not on the Shortlists of both the Top 5 Coaches and Top 3 Coaches for the Super Eagles job. A lot of Nigerians are murmuring aloud that the State FA Chairmen dominated NFF Board desperately wanted to Hire a Foreign Coach after the hurried exit of Coach Peseiro who Nigerians virtually coerced to exit after the expiry of his Contract.

The same Set of alleging Nigerians further posit that the NFF Cabal wanted a Foreign Coach replacement for Coach Peseiro in order to continue both their ignoble Foreign Coach Salary Kickback Racquet which involved Sharing the Foreign Coaches Salaries with him. And also to continue their Foreign Players Invitation To The Super Eagles Racquetting. Where the Foreign Players are forced to pay a Huge Ransom as Bribes for their Invitation to don the Super Eagles jersey. The Allegers further claim that it was these unpatriotic Racquets that is the main reason why our Foreign Players are Imported Wholesale into the Super Eagles. And our Home based Players who can't afford the Huge Ransom are neglected. The people also say that it was because of the

ditty Foreign Players Racquetting. That led to the unceremonious Ejection of Star Striker, Sadiq Umar from the AFCON Super Eagles on grounds of a Fake Injury. And the same "Injured" Sadiq went ahead to play for his Spanish Club in the League, 4 days later.

One Player's Agent, Jolly Ogu who was the Man that brought Coach Peseiro to Nigeria have often confirmed the existence of the highly condemnable Racquet. So, the NFF Racquetting Cabal truly wanted a Foreign Coach for the elongation of their ugly Business. But the persistent outburst of Football loving Nigerians that they don't want a Foreign Coach any longer for the Super Eagles scuttled that Plan for the Racquetters. The Cabal now turned to their PLAN B which is to Engage an Indigenous Coaches who is has been a part of the status quo, who will continue and protect their nefarious Racquet. Finidi was the Coach the Cabal were looking for. Because, as the Assistant Coach of the Super Eagles under Coach Peseiro, Finidi was in the system. That's why even when the NFF Technical Committee had closed the door against Coach Finidi in both the Shortlist of 5 Coaches and Shortlist of 3 Coaches. The NFF Racquetters, still went ahead to smuggle him into the fray. And Appointed Finidi the Chief Coach of the Super Eagles of Nigeria.

But the NFF Cabal knew who the Best Indigenous Coach for the Super Eagles was. The NFF Racquetting Mafia knew the obvious Choice of Nigerians for the Super Eagles job. They knew it was Coach Emmanuel Amunike that Majority of Nigerians wanted. Because, the Spokespersons of the NFF have continued saying in the Media that the NFF knew that Coach Amunike was the Best Man for the Super Eagles Coaching duty. But the NFF Image makers assert that it was because of the Truth SLIDING TACKLES and it's Author, Barrister Iyke Igbokwe was telling the NFF Cabal on Maladmistration of our Football.

That made the State FA Chairmen dominated NFF Board not to give Coach Amunike the job. The NFF people even went ahead to incite Nigerians against me that they should hold Barrister Igbokwe responsible for Coach Amunike not getting the job. A lot of people are Living Witnesses to the Open Confession of the NFF Board that they knew that Coach Amunike was the Best Candidate.

So, armed with this clear information that the NFF Board knew the Best Man for the job but refused to Announce him as the Super Eagles Coach. Some Other people including SLIDING TACKLES are bold to allege that apart from the serious Motivation of the above mentioned Racquetting being responsible for the hushed Appointment of Coach Finidi. There's another angle to why Finidi was Appointed ahead of Coach Amunike. The "Almighty" State FA Chairmen dominated NFF Board in his usual arrogance, intended to "Revenge" against the Nation for having the impetus and loquacious audacity to "Reject" The Foreign Coach and Clamour for the Indigenous Coach. What the NFF Racquetting Cabal who were very annoyed with Nigerians for spoiling their age long market with Foreign Coaches did by sidelining the "People's Choice", Coach Emmanuel Amunike and Appointing Coach Finidi George as the Super Eagles Coach. Is to spite on the Nation's face and tell us that, Yes, you people want an Indigenous Coach of Coach Amunike, bah? But because you Nigerians spoiled our market by rejecting our Football Coach. We (the NFF Mafia) won't give you, Coach Amunike. We will Appoint Coach Finidi, our Man instead. So, the Appointment of Coach Finidi is.....

NFF'S "REVENGE" AGAINST THE NATION'S REJECTION OF FOREIGN COACH!

Barrister Iyke Igbokwe ( Torchlight Of Nigeria Football )

WhatsApp : 09136715922



On air in August

**Maiden Anniversary**  
**Thursday 10th October 2024**

**Round table discussion,  
Award, Raffle, Souvenir**



# CSED takes Netball to Cross River State

Advised that students and athletes are entitled to take part in sports in a safe environment. Access to free online safeguarding training was later provided to the newly trained netball coaches. The Director of schools from the Ministry of Education Mrs. Okama Amos stated that she was very pleased to see an NGO that has a passion for carrying out development and empowerment programmes that are targeted at the female gender, which was one of the reasons she approved the training course for P.E. Teachers in the state. She urged the participants to take advantage of the training and become reliable coaches in a sport that is being revived in Nigeria.

The Director of schools from the Ministry of Education Mrs. Okama Amos stated that she was very pleased to see an NGO that has a passion for carrying out development and empowerment programmes that are targeted at the female gender, which was one of the reasons she approved the training course for P.E. Teachers in the state. She urged the participants to take advantage of the training and become reliable coaches in a sport that is being revived in Nigeria.

The administrator expressed her readiness to work together with the Director of School Sports of the Ministry, Mr. Orlando Asuquo, to monitor the use of the freely donated Netball starter packs (a pair of netball rims/nets, finger-held whistles, two sets of netball training bibs, and balls) to the representatives of the participating schools.

In a speech, the Director of Sports of the State Sports Commission, Mr. Moses Ita also urged the participants to make good use of the knowledge gained during the training



as their post-training actions will lead to the development of the game of Netball in the state. Mr. Moses Ita added that Netball will soon become a medal event in the National Sports Festival. Conclusively, Mr. Moses Ita echoed his happiness as a participant from the State Sports Commission in attendance for the training, promising to help spread

the sport to schools in other local government areas that were not represented in this seminar.

Conclusively, Mr. Moses Ita echoed his happiness as a participant from the State Sports Commission in attendance for the training, promising to help spread to schools in other local government areas

that were not represented in this seminar.  
**CSED TAKES NETBALL TRAINING TO ENUGU STATE**  
 November 26, 2022  
 In "Sports"  
 CSED Trains 35 NETBALL Coaches In YENAGOA

**TO SUPPORT THE CORONATION CEREMONY**

**Account Details**  
**OSHIOMOGHO FELIX**  
**2085587081**  
**United Bank For Africa (UBA)**

**Phone number:**  
**07083255766**

SEND PROOF OF TRANSFER/SUPPORT TO THE PHONE NUMBER SHOWN FOR PROPER DOCUMENTATIONS

*Coronation Ceremony of*

**HRH. EDWARD OKHUMODE UMOLE**  
THE OKPE-UKPI (VILLAGE HEAD) OF OGBONA, ETSAKO CENTRAL, EDO STATE

ca (UBA)  
 Ensure you send your proof of transfer/payment to the phone number attached @+234 816 174 2830, for proper documentation purposes.

Note: This Contribution is solely towards the successful Coronation event and entertainment of guest, and is in no way connected to the Fundraiser for the Construction of an Ultramodern Palace at Ogbona. The Fundraiser will be coordinated at the event proper.

Thanks and God Bless.  
**IYERE SYLVESTER**  
 CEO. Dreamsville Entertainment And Events World

As a follow up to this wonderful briefing by HRH. EDWARD OKHUMODE UMOLE, find at-

tached the account details for your goodwill contribution towards the Coronation Event.

Account Details  
 Felix Oshiomogho  
 2085587081  
 United Bank For Afri-





Oakfield Int'l School

# OAKFIELD INT'L SCHOOLS

...BUILDING BEACONS OF GREATNESS

**ADMISSION OPEN FOR 2023/2024 SESSION**

Contact Us: Phone No: 08034788533  
 Email: info.oakfieldschool@gmail.com  
 School Address: Plot F2/F3 Frank Maluze Street, New GRA TransEkulu, Enugu.

**ENROLL NOW!**

REGISTRATION IS ON GOING FOR...  
**CRECHE NURSERY PRIMARY SECONDARY**




# OAKFIELD INT'L SCHOOLS

## ADMISSION OPEN FOR 2023/2024 SESSION

**ENROLL NOW!**



Contact Us: Phone No: 08034788533  
 School Address: Plot F2/F3 Frank Maluze Street, New GRA TransEkulu, Enugu.

Email: info.oakfieldschool@gmail.com



Oakfield Int'l School  
 ...BUILDING BEACONS OF GREATNESS



# OAKFIELD INT'L SCHOOLS

## ADMISSION OPEN FOR 2023/2024 SESSION

Registration is On Going For...  
**CRECHE NURSERY PRIMARY SECONDARY**

Contact Us: Phone No: 08034788533  
 Email: info.oakfieldschool@gmail.com  
 School Address: Plot F2/F3 Frank Maluze Street, New GRA TransEkulu, Enugu.

**ENROLL NOW!**







**1XBET** PROFESSIONAL BETTING **Cup 2023**







DISCOVER I'M ALIVE BASKETBALL ACADEMY

Presents  
**COACH FREGENE  
MEMORIAL  
BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP**

Team

Under 10 and 13 categories  
Discover I'm alive minions (Warri)  
Impression basketball academy  
(Asaba)

Female team

Discover im alive sparks (Warri)  
Divine speed basketball academy (Warri)  
Impression basketball academy (Asaba)  
Delta force (Asaba)  
Peace basketball academy (Warri)

Male teams, Delta force, Peace basketball academy  
Divine speed basketball academy, Impression basketball academy  
Government house, Discover I'm alive Spartans  
Discover mavericks 1, Discover mavericks 2, Achievers

*Other Activities*

Moment of silence

Exhibition game in memory of our beloved coach

*Date*

16th Of May  
To 19th May 2024

*Time*

9am Daily

In Conjunction With Delta State  
**Basketball Association**

For Sponsorship

Call Coach Kenny: 09061115167

Coach Benson: 08055860524



Anambra State Football Association in Partnership with Patricklingo Pharmaceuticals limited (Makers of BabaTem)

Presents the 2024 Anambra State All Stars Games, tagged BABATEM ANAMBRA STATE ALL STARS GAMES 2024

The All Stars Games is strictly for retired football players from the age of 40 and Above

Teams will register with the sum of Sixty thousand Naira only (N60,000)

Winner will get a Cash Prize of One Million Naira

Runner Up N500,000

Third placed teams gets N300,000

Registration starts 10th of May 2024 and ends 31st May 2024

For more inquiries call 07033884848, 08035497968

KEERE O... LOSAN ONI (THIS AFTERNOON) TUESDAY MAY 7 2024, SPORTS JOURNALISM LEGEND PA (ADE)SEGUN ABBAS ADENUGA a.k.a ANENE/MR. WEST COAST RETURNS AS OUR 'OBA ORI ODAN' (SPORTS HEROES PAST)... AGBA OJE TO TI COVER WEST AFRICA, AFRICA, OLYMPICS, NATIONS CUP, WORLD CUP etc YI BAWA SO DIE LAST TUESDAY & CONTINUES THIS AFTERNOON... PROGRAMME: OBA-ORI-ODAN... TIME: 2.15PM - 3PM... STATION: MILIKI 101.3FM (ALSO ONLINE VIA [milikifmlive.com](http://milikifmlive.com) OR Radio Garden App OR Follow on Social Media @miliki1013FM ON FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM/X)... LINGUA FRANCA: YORUBA... Eo tun gbo authentic gists about then Challenge Cup, 1973 AAG, 1976 Nations Cup Ethiopia 1976, Tony Eke/YSFON/1985 1st U-17 World Cup victory, LAFA, International Friendlies of yore, Stationery Stores (of course ) & more, his contributions to Nigeria's sports development to date + his views on our sports heritage documentation as a nation... Atokun Eto Yomi OPAKUNLE nsope E MA MISS FOLLOW-UP EDITION YI RARA OOO!



# Rivers United 's Empty Threats and the NPFL Board

The board of the Nigeria Professional Football League the other day announced that all league fixtures will be postponed for a month,

The announcement was made to allow Rivers United to complete their outstanding games on or before May 18. A week's break will ensue before all 20 teams resume on the 25th of May. In a memo released by the NPFL Chief Operating Officer, Davidson Owumi, it was stated that the league was put on hold to provide a level playing platform for all teams going into the last six fixtures of the season

Meanwhile Rivers United wrote to the chief operating officer of the NPFL, Threatening to pull out from all football related activities, because they are not given fair treatment considering how much they've invested in the league.

First of all, the inconsistency of our league matches and abrupt change in fixtures does more harm than good to our league in general and also sometimes affects teams who are struggling financially to execute their games.

The Nigerian Premier Football league is



of age and should be handled professionally both on and off the pitch,

Coming to the arrangement of fixtures, fixtures should be arranged putting in con-

sideration the international engagements and other compulsory competitions, so that outstanding games will reduce thereby bringing balance to league.

Rivers United 's threat of withdrawal is a joke and uncalled for, some will say that they are exhibiting entitlement mentality which is uncalled for.

Withdrawal from the league and football activities means that the team will be shut down, All players and staffs will lose their jobs, which I know they don't want it to happen,

No team should be treated specially, it should be fair treatment for all, the preferential treatment of some teams have affected Nigeria football internationally, right now Nigerian clubs find it difficult to win Continental Engagements even with teams from lesser football countries, All hands should be on Deck to make our league the best league in the world

The league organizers should do more, the teams should always cooperate with the NFF to develop football in the Country

Ndema Obinna Phamouzzj

## Finidi, Cry No More

BY EMEKA OBASI

Drenched in tears invisible since the passage of younger brother, Igeniwari, new Super Eagles coach, Finidi George, deserves honours for believing in self and country. This journey to the plum job was full of twists, turns, bruises and blood.

Igeniwari died on September 9, 1995, playing for Enugu Rangers. It was in Ibadan following their 1-0 victory over Stationary Stores, in a Challenge Cup game. He was part of the Golden Eaglets squad to the Ecuador '95 FIFA Under 17 Championships. That was the year Finidi won the UEFA Champions League with Ajax.

From ecstasy, the George family went into agony. The trauma was compounded because till date, there is no official pronouncement on who killed Igeniwari. Twice, Finidi flew back home from Amsterdam but was not allowed to see his brother's body, by the police.

Some of us thought the bullet that killed him came from Stores supporters who went wild after the referee awarded Rangers a penalty in the 87th minute. The result was a 1-0 victory for the Flying Antelopes. However, Adetilewa Adebajo, one of the owners of the Lagos club argues otherwise.

He wrote: "The bullet that killed Igeniwari, was allegedly fired by the Aide De Camp (ADC) to a Military Administrator, whose car was coming from behind the Rangers bus. It's movement had been blocked by the throng of supporters (Rangers and Stores supporters), all trying to exit the stadium."

According to Adebajo, "To disperse the supporters, the ADC came out of the car, in an attempt to fire into the air but his gun discharged half way up. Igeniwari was seated at the rear of the bus and unfortunately, took the bullet. NFF banned Stores as a scape goat."

Adebajo admitted that he was not at the stadium but as a stakeholder, got information from those who should know. Police investigations did not yield any official statement. NFF later unbanned Stores after much pressure.

There is also another version that blames the Police for the tragedy. "The police used live ammunition to control the crowd. More than one person died although it was reported that only Igeniwari died." The painful part was that Finidi could not grace his brother's funeral.

It has been a hard road to the top. Finidi's Eagles debut was sweet and sour. He scored the last goal, three minutes to time in the 7-1 demolition of Etalons of Burkina Faso. That



was the day the Eagles cut their long pants because an NFF official forgot to bring their shorts to Sportcity.

Finidi came in for Austin Eguavoen. The game cost NFF chairman, Yusuf Ali, his job. Secretary General, Patrick Okpomo, resigned. The Burkinabes who got a 1-1 result in Ouagadougou earlier, were taunted as 'Burkina Suffer' by Nigerian fans.

From that first cap on July 27, 1991, Clemens Westerhof stuck to Finidi. It was no surprise that Ajax snapped him in 1993. Until the winger moved to Real Betis in 1996, Ajax remained Dutch champions, three times consecutively. He also played for Mallorca and Ipswich.

Finidi scored the goal that took the Eagles to their first World Cup, USA 1994. His 20th minute strike in Algeria lasted for 70 minutes before the hosts equalised. A 1-1 ending was perfect. And he graced the Mundial twice, from America to France.

This same star was denied a third World Cup opportunity as Vice Captain to Sunday Oliseh.

After losing to Senegal in the semis of

the Mali 2002 African Nations Cup, the NFF felt the captain was a bad influence on the team with what was seen as little respect for government officials. Coach Shuaibu Amodu was sacked and replaced by Adegboye Onigbinde who overhauled the team to Korea/ Japan 2002.

Finidi would always prove himself. While playing for Calabar Rovers against ACB in the Nigerian league, he got the winning goal three minutes to the final whistle. Rovers Chairman, Rowland Obu, had asked for the player's substitution but the coach refused.

From Government Comprehensive Secondary School, Borokiri, Finidi joined Agip in 1985. Two years later he crossed over to NNPC, Port Harcourt. After one season, Sharks grabbed him in 1988.

I met Finidi for the first time in 1990. He was one of the Local Leaguers kept busy at the Eagles' Otta Farm Camp of Dr. Olusegun Obasanjo, by coach Tunde Disu, under the supervision of Westerhof. The Sharks player always moved around with team mates Eson Osagie and Fubara Owunaro. Goddy Eke and Amir Angwe, were also there.

This experience will help him in managing the Super Eagles. As coach of Enyimba, Finidi understands the Nigerian Premier League better than his European predecessors who chose to operate from overseas.

Finidi is not the noisy type but will brook no indiscipline. He has more trophies in his room, than any player under his charge - African Nations Cup. The Toyota World Championships Cup. UEFA Super Cup and Champions League. Double World Cup Appearance.

Perhaps, Igeniwari would have done well outside Africa like his Ecuador '95 contemporaries, Stephen Appiah, Tim Howard, Harry Kewell, Shinji Ono, Brett Emerton and Junichi Inamoto. Ecuador highlighted some football families - Amunke Kingsley, Yobo Albert, Oruma Johnson and Igwilo James.

Finidi still has elder brother, Alari, who also played good soccer, around. The Kerekese are proud of yet another son, after giving Nigeria Adokiye Amiesimaka and Richard Owubokiri. For a man who never turned his back on Nigeria, this is his time to shine.

\*\*\*@Saturday Vanguard



# Maradona's Golden Ball Trophy At World Cup Goes For Sale published 25 Mins Ago On May 7, 2024



Diego Maradona's Golden Ball trophy won for being named the best player at the 1986 World Cup will be auctioned in France in June, the Aguttes auction house said on Tuesday.

This is the first Golden Ball to go for auction and while the value is still to be confirmed, the auction house expects it to fetch millions on June 6.

Maradona, who died in 2020, won the award after leading Argentina to World Cup victory in Mexico, scoring five goals at the finals where he captained his country and played every minute of the tournament.

That tournament is probably best remembered for Maradona's two goals against England in the quarter-finals.

Maradona outjumped England keeper Peter Shilton as he thumped in the first goal with a raised fist, which he later dubbed as being scored by the "Hand of God".

The second was an incredible mazy slalom run from his own half, when he dribbled past five English outfield players, and was voted as the "Goal of the Century".

The jersey he wore that day, along with the ball from the match, have both previously been sold at auction.

After his display against England, Maradona went on to score the two goals which defeated Belgium in the semi-final and Argentina won a thrilling final 3-2 against West Germany.

The Golden Ball award was introduced at the 1982 World Cup, and its list of winners include Italy's Paolo Rossi, Romario and Ronaldo of Brazil, Zinedine Zidane of France, while Argentine great Lionel Messi is the only player to have won the accolade twice.

Maradona's award had disappeared before resurfacing among several trophy lots in an auction room.

## NPFL: Saka meets Sunshine Stars technical crew, Players ...Proffers immediate solutions to challenges

Ondo State Commissioner, Youths Development and sports, Hon. Saka Yusuf-Ogunleye has promised to improve the welfare of players and backroom staff to enhance productivity.

Yusuf-Ogunleye made the assertion when he met with players, technical crew and backroom staff of Sunshine Stars FC at the games village in Oda road, Akure.

The commissioner opined that it became important to meet with the team and address challenges and offer immediate solutions geared towards getting desired results.

He commended the players for their beautiful displays against Shooting Stars stars FC in Ibadan, but cautioned against complacency in defense in their subsequent matches.

"Indiscipline in different spheres brought us to this level despite having some quality players in our team, an end has come to that," he said

Yusuf-Ogunleye said he will look into the issues of Fake Registration, Betting and others that had been alleged to have affected the team negatively.

"The challenges will be addressed and those acts of insubordination and indiscipline will be a thing of the past. Moreso, let me quickly inform you all that I will increase your match bonus, feeding allowance will also be increased and other entitlements will improve," he said

The commissioner directed that electricity should be restored at the team's camp while placing a ban on players boarding a bike to training sessions.



"It's shocking to hear you players talk about the bad state of your hostel, from this moment, it will be conducive, electricity will be restored from today and please let me notify everyone here, An end has come to players taking bike to training sessions, you are professionals and it's time to treat you as real professionals," he added.

On issues raised by some players that they

were abandoned each time they got injured in line of duty and bills for their treatment not attended to by the team officials, the commissioner said it was pathetic to hear such and gave a direct approval for the payment of all medical bills of injured players.

"Please let it be on record that no player should be allowed to treat himself with his money after

sustaining injury, and from today an improvement has come to the medical team in terms of money." He added

Saka Yusuf, approved the release of funds for the purchase of drugs for the medical team of the agency.

On the issue of money not released to backroom staff to keep Jerseys of players clean as authorised by the management, he ordered the immediate approval that such an amount should be paid directly into the account of the staff in charge.

The commissioner directed immediate repair of vehicles on or before Thursday.

Furthermore, he directed the coaches to submit list of regular players promising to reduce the number of players from 52 to a reasonable size.

He urged players tagged "Political" to exit the club as Sunshine Stars FC is not a party secretariat.

He said politics should not be prioritized ahead of results.

He said the Football Agency isn't a charity home.

"Throughout the county there isn't a state that has a football agency, we have and we are most the least on the log, poor management of the agency has led to the challenges we are facing but we shall overcome," he noted.

The commissioner, also set up a committee to look at the scouting and transfer of players in the U-17 team.

He advised those redeployed to the U-17 team and Sunshine Queens to resume saying, "Change is the only thing that is Constant"





# THE FIRST CHOICE OF EVERY INVESTOR

Cultivating rewarding relationship  
beyond the norm is our strength

## INVEST IN TNFF



- GTI Asset Management and Trust Ltd, a Strategic Partner to NPFL
- GTI Marketing Team in it's mission to collaborate with Partners, Sponsors and Investors to support the NPFL
- GTI continued contribution for the upliftment of the NPFL have Earned them widespread commendations from stakeholders locally and globally.

GTI House 4, Tinubu Street, Central Business District Lagos.  
Tel: 01-2772481, 01-2772484, +234 908 299 9291, (234) 1 2772489  
Website: [GTI.com.ng](http://GTI.com.ng), Email: [gtiamt@gti.com.ng](mailto:gtiamt@gti.com.ng)



# Attention Shifts To Okpekpe As Next Host Of Gold Label Road Race



Global focus has now shifted to Okpekpe in Edo State, Nigeria as the next host of a World Athletics gold label road race in after the Türkiye İş Bankası Istanbul Half Marathon held in Istanbul, Turkey at the end of last month.

The Okpekpe International 10km road race which holds on the 25th of this month is the 23rd of the 45 World Athletics gold label races listed to hold this year in the calendar of World Athletics and like in previous years, it will be the only label road race to hold on the day irrespective of the label category.

Pamodzi Sports Marketing International, organizers of the race, says this year's edition is a celebration of 10 years of organising a truly World class event that has made Nigeria one of the destinations of sort for sports, especially road running events.

'We are proud of the big step we took in 2015 to make the Okpekpe 10km road race the first to get World Athletics' recognition in West Africa with our bronze label status.

We are super delighted the effect we have had in getting more road races in Nigeria get World Athletics' attention and the certifica-

tion of over 15 road race courses in Nigeria by World Athletics accredited course measurer,' said Zack Amodu, the race director.

Amodu is confident the Okpekpe 10km road race will continue to blaze the trail in Nigeria nay West Africa and believes the support of the host community, the race's partners, the Edo state government in particular and the officials, especially the volunteers who work to organize the race that has continued to be recognized and applauded by World Athletics in the past nine years have been the mo-

tivating factor to keep setting the bar high.

'The elite cast has been one of the best any gold label race could have and the result is that some of these elite athletes have gone on to become medalists at World Athletics sponsored global events as we saw last year when Daniel Ebenyo, the Kenya who owns our course record won a silver medal at the World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary and the World Athletics Road Running Championships in Riga, Latvia.