

FOREWORD

Starting with three nations in 1957, the African Cup of Nations has progressed and transformed into becoming our Continent's premier showpiece event.

The verses penned within this joyful collection will take the reader on a momentous journey.

The author Emdad Rahman transports the reader back into the stadiums, to witness the joyful celebrations of the masses, to savour the unique aromas, and to take a front show seat amongst the singing jolly throngs of African football supporters. In lightning flashes readers will switch instantly from Cabinda, Lubango, Benguela to Luanda. This book highlights an aspect of the best of what Africa has to offer.

As a spectator it is natural that I have suffered itchy feet, whilst fellow African players participate in this exceptional football Tournament.

The memories as always are many: Angola's 8 goal draw with Mali, Malawi thrashing the Algerian Desert Foxes, super sub Gedo, on his way to becoming the tournament top scorer, and Ghana's impressive youth proving to be more than able understudies.

Let us hope that the African Cup of Nations – Angola 2010 will mark a new stage in the development of football in the country. On a crucial point, let us spare a few moments in remembrance and in honour of the three members of the Togolese team that lost their lives. Our thoughts and condolences are with the Togolese and we stand united with them. It is moments like these when football very much takes second place.

Angola 2010 will be remembered for more than just football. The death of squad members and the serious psychological trauma that has affected the rest, resulted in Togo's

subsequent withdrawal from the event. It will forever mark the memory of the tournament. Champions Egypt were clearly leading lights and all this without their star men, Aboutrika, Barakat and Zaki. It is apt that after their hat trick of recent wins they have been presented indefinitely with the trophy.

Emdad's penned words provide the reader with insightful perspectives of the African Cup of Nations. Emdad depicts his talent laden words in a manner that enables the reader to embark on an African journey.

This publication is unique and very much overdue. It is evident that the words we read are that of a passionate fan, spoken from the heart.

I wish Emdad the best of luck and encourage fans of football to have a read, be it at home, at work, or on the terraces. I also hope that educational institutes will adopt this book as I can see these verses, using football as a medium becoming an effective tool to promote reading, especially amongst our young.

African football is on the rise and the reality is that this year the greatest showpiece on earth is coming to the African continent. Nothing will stop South Africa or the "African Dream."

On a final note, the Bafana Bafana may not have qualified for Angola 2010, but I am confident that it will not affect our World Cup aspirations.

As some experts have pointed out, our absence from the African Cup of Nations will provide an air of mystery to our predicted outcomes for the Greatest Show on Earth.

Nothing is impossible in football.

Aaron Teboho Mokoena
Captain, Bafana Bafana South Africa
& Portsmouth Football Club