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RED ARROWS UPGRADE TO STATE-OF-THE-ART STATSPORTS GPS SYSTEM

By Lucky Chama



Red Arrows Football Club has upgraded its football operations with state-of-the-art Statsports GPS player-tracking technology as the Zambian club continues to strengthen its data-driven approach to performance management.

The technology was put to use yesterday, Wednesday, September 9, 2026, as the Airmen intensified preparations for the second leg of their CAF Confederation Cup preliminary-round tie against FC Rouge of Madagascar.

Red Arrows trained at the Athletico Sports Complex in Lusaka, with the session deliberately designed to simulate the conditions the team expects to encounter in Port Louis, Mauritius.

The technical bench replicated, as closely as possible, the playing surface and scheduled kick-off conditions expected for Sunday's decisive second leg, while using the GPS technology to gather performance data and assess the players.

The Statsports package comprises an elite player performance analysis unit, customer docking station, 80 player vests, an Apple iPad, laptop, heart-rate monitors and analysis software, among other equipment.

The technology enables the technical team and sports scientists to collect and analyse key performance indicators such as distance covered, sprinting, high-intensity running, accelerations, decelerations, individual training loads and work rates.

The data provides coaches with an objective assessment of player output, allowing them to better manage training intensity, recovery periods and workloads while supporting injury-prevention strategies and individual player development.

Red Arrows Chief Executive Officer Lt Col Kambani Ronald Lungu welcomed the development, describing it as an important investment in the club's technical development.

"The introduction of GPS technology is part of our broader strategy to professionalise the club and ensure that our technical team has access to accurate performance data. Modern football is increasingly data driven and we want Red Arrows to be part of that evolution," Lungu said.

Club president Col Moses Kambimbi said the investment demonstrated the club's determination to remain progressive and competitive in an increasingly sophisticated football environment.

"We must continue to invest in systems that improve the quality of football we produce. This technology is not simply about having modern equipment, it is about creating an environment where performance can be measured, understood and improved," Kambimbi said.

Head coach Chisi Mbewe also welcomed the technology, saying it would complement the technical team's assessment of players and provide greater precision in managing training loads and match preparation.

"The eye test remains important but having measurable data gives the technical team another layer of information. We can better understand the demands being placed on individual players and make more informed decisions around training, recovery and match readiness," Mbewe said.

The introduction of Statsports GPS technology comes as Red Arrows competes at both domestic and continental level, where the demands of a congested football calendar require increasingly sophisticated player-management systems.

The club says the investment is therefore more than a technological upgrade, representing its broader ambition to build modern football structures capable of supporting sustained success.

Red Arrows joins a select group of African football institutions reported to be using Statsports GPS-based performance technology, including ASEC Mimosas of Côte d'Ivoire, Durban City of South Africa, Young Africans Sports Club of Tanzania, the Ghana Football Association and the Rwanda Football Association.

LUCHEMBE: WE ARE NOT AGAINST OFFICIALS

By Lucky Chama



Olympian Kennedy Luchembe says athletes are not against athletics officials but want leadership and support structures that evolve alongside the development of athletes.

Luchembe says officials need to raise the standard as Zambian athletes are increasingly exposed to higher levels of competition, professional environments and international championships.

He says the growing gap in experience, exposure and understanding between athletes and officials can sometimes result in misunderstandings between the two sides.

"We are not against our officials; we simply need a system that grows with its athletes," Luchembe said.

He said as athletes continue to develop, the country's leadership and support structures must also evolve to match the level they are reaching.

Luchembe said this should include better planning, structures and programmes aimed at facilitating athletes' preparation and participation in competitions to produce the results Zambia desires on the international stage.

"As athletes, we are constantly exposed to higher levels of competition, professional environments, and international championships, and in some cases, our growth and experience have moved faster than the systems and leadership supporting us," he said.

Luchembe said improving the systems supporting athletes should be viewed as part of the broader national interest.

"Zambia is bigger than everyone, for that reason we should give the best for our country," he said.

CHIPEPO PLEASED AS ZESCO'S GOALS FLOW IN NCHANGA FRIENDLIES

By Lucky Chama



ZESCO United head coach Mwenya Chipepo says the team's improved goal return was one of the biggest positives after two pre-season friendly matches against Nchanga Rangers at Trade Fair Ground in Ndola on Wednesday.

ZESCO won the first encounter 2-1 before staging a remarkable second-half comeback from three goals down to draw the second match 3-3.

Chipepo praised his players for their fighting spirit, particularly in the second game, where they refused to surrender after trailing 3-0 at half-time.

"I'd like to congratulate my players for the spirited fight they displayed this afternoon. It wasn't easy because we were playing Nchanga Rangers. They have quality players, a good coach and an experienced one, and we have learnt a lot from them," Chipepo said.

He said the results were encouraging, especially against a Nchanga side he believes performed well last season.

"Nchanga did well last season compared to ZESCO, and if you draw one game and beat them in the other game, it means that we are going somewhere," he said.

Chipepo was particularly impressed by his side's response after falling three goals behind in the second match.

"I like the spirit of the players because once you are down by 3-0, you can even go down to 5-0 or 6-0. But they refused. They refused to be beaten at home. So, I like the spirit which they have," he said.

With the MTN Super League Transitional Season approaching, Chipepo said he was encouraged to see his team scoring more goals after being concerned about their finishing in previous friendly matches.

"So far, I was worried with scoring because if you have observed the friendly games we have been playing, we were only scoring one and drawing. So today, for us to score two goals and three goals, it means something to us," he said.

However, Chipepo said the striking department remains an area requiring further work, particularly in converting chances.

"The most important area is striking force. I'm not saying that they are bad players, but it's something we need to work on, especially when it comes to converting," he said.

AIR FORCE COMMAND TO ACT ON SHE WOLVES CONCERNS

By FT Reporter



The Red Arrows She Wolves leadership says concerns raised by the women's rugby team have been brought to the attention of Air Force Command for action.

Chairperson of the Red Arrows Rugby Club Women's Team, Col Josephine Nachona, disclosed this when she met the She Wolves during a training session as the team intensified preparations for upcoming fixtures.

Nachona assured the players that the Training Department had already raised their concerns with Air Force Command and that the matters were being brought to the attention of the relevant authorities.

She also urged the players to remain committed, disciplined and united, reminding them of the responsibility they carry in representing the Red Arrows brand.

Nachona encouraged the team to continue working hard and putting the Red Arrows brand on the map, noting that the club is among the best and that maintaining its reputation requires dedication both on and off the rugby field.

She further urged the players to look after and support one another, saying their bond should extend beyond training sessions, match days and their association with the club.

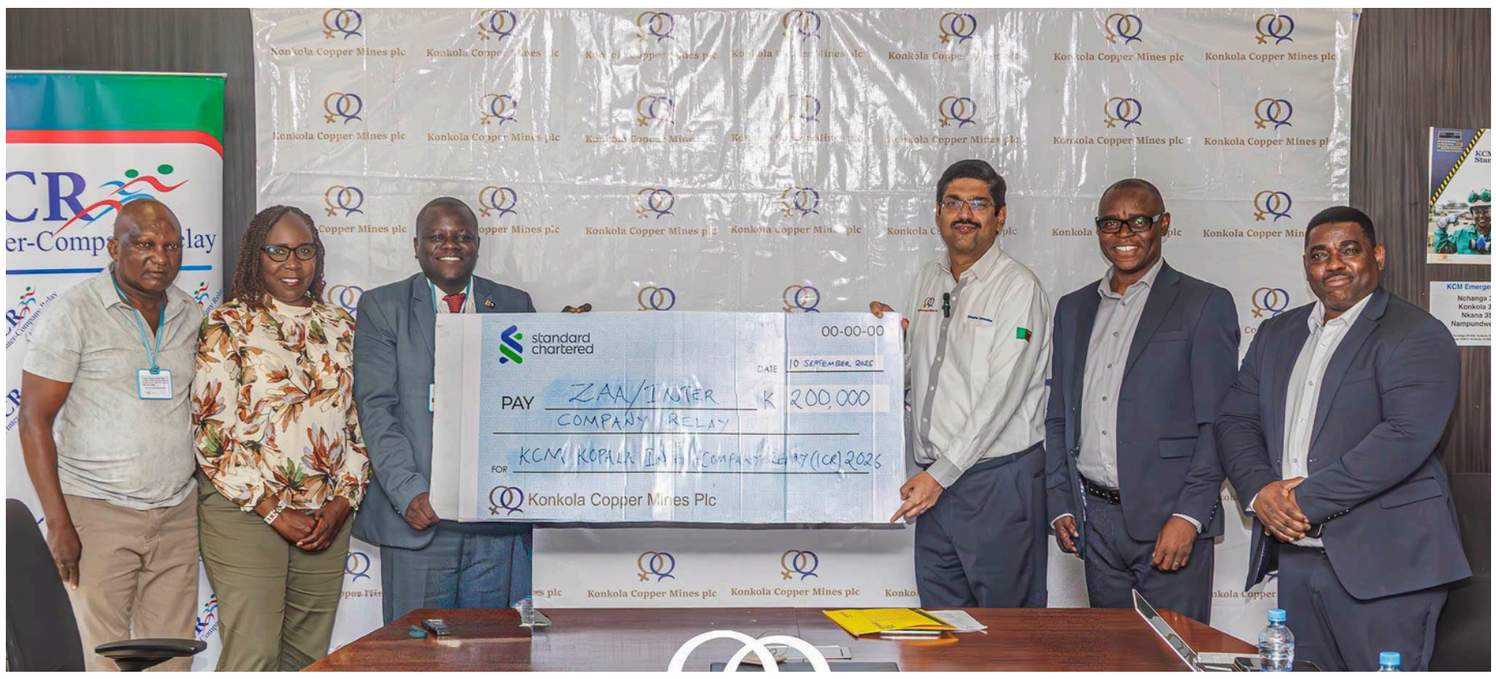
"Support one another, take care of each other and remain a family, not only when you are at training or playing for the club, but even when you are out there in society," she said.

The interaction was aimed at reinforcing team spirit, discipline and unity as the She Wolves continue preparations for their upcoming fixtures.



KCM PUMPS K200,000 INTO INTER-COMPANY RELAY

By Lucky Chama



Konkola Copper Mines (KCM) has announced a K200,000 sponsorship towards the 2026 KCM Kopala Inter-Company Relay, reaffirming its support for athletics, health and wellness in Zambia.

The relay, held in partnership with Zambia Athletics, is scheduled for October 17, 2026, at Nchanga Stadium in Chingola under the theme "Celebrating Corporate Partnerships, Health and Wellness – By Acting Together, We Can Win."

KCM Deputy Chief Executive Officer Satish Kumar said the mining company was proud to support an initiative that brings organisations together around shared goals of health, wellness and teamwork.

"As KCM, we are proud to support the KCM Kopala Inter-Company Relay with a sponsorship of K200,000. This initiative brings together corporate partners around health, wellness and teamwork, values that are important to building healthier and stronger communities," Kumar said.

He said KCM believed that collective action could contribute to the growth of sport and stronger communities.

The 2026 edition will mark the second consecutive year that KCM has sponsored the Inter-Company Relay, which has been running for more than 26 years since its launch in 1999.

Zambia Athletics president Major Bernard Bwalya expressed appreciation for KCM's continued support, saying the relay had grown into an important platform for bringing companies together while promoting employee wellness, networking and talent identification.
"We sincerely thank KCM for its continued support and commitment to sport. This is the second consecutive year that KCM has sponsored the Inter-Company Relay, demonstrating its belief in the value of sport, health and wellness, corporate engagement and the development of athletics in Zambia," Bwalya said.

The event, which was previously held only in Lusaka, has since been decentralised to other provinces, including the Copperbelt, to promote wider participation.
Bwalya said the relay also provides an opportunity to identify emerging talent that can go on to represent Zambia at Pan-African and international competitions.

This year's event is expected to attract more than 50 organisations, with over 1,000 participants and spectators.

The 2026 KCM Kopala Inter-Company Relay will also be integrated with the KCM Sports Day and will feature various sporting and recreational activities alongside the relay races.
The programme will include a 10-kilometre corporate race as well as races involving chief executive officers and management teams.
KCM's partnership with Zambia Athletics also extends to supporting Nchanga Athletics Club and Konkola Athletics Club, contributing to athlete development and participation.

DEC PROMOTES CLEAN, RESPONSIBLE SPORTS

By FT Reporter



The Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC), through its Education and Counselling Department (ECD) in Copperbelt Province, has engaged athletes on the dangers of doping and the use of prohibited substances in sports.

The sensitisation sessions were held with players from Mufulira Leopards Rugby Club and Kamfinsa Correctional Service Rangers Football Club in Kitwe.

The engagements focused on the risks associated with banned substances and their potential impact on athletes' health, careers and the integrity of sport.

Players were encouraged to make healthy, informed and responsible choices while upholding the principles of clean, fair and drug-free competition.

The DEC said the engagements form part of its continued efforts to raise awareness within sports communities and promote healthy lifestyles and responsible choices among athletes.

The Commission stressed the importance of athletes understanding the dangers associated with prohibited substances as they pursue their sporting careers.

MBEWE LANDS NATIONAL TEAM ROLE AHEAD OF CRUCIAL U-23 AFCON QUALIFIERS

By Lucky Chama



Red Arrows head coach Chisi Mbewe has landed the Zambia Under-23 national team coaching job ahead of the country's crucial qualifiers for the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations in Egypt.

The Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) has appointed Mbewe as head coach of the Under-23 side, with the team also tasked with securing qualification to the 2028 Olympic Games.

Mbewe will be assisted by Numba Mumamba as first assistant coach, George Chilufya as second assistant and Kalililo Kakonje as goalkeeper coach.

The rest of the technical bench comprises 2012 Africa Cup of Nations-winning vice-captain Chintu Kampamba as physical coach, Mumba Mwila as team manager, Ndaba Sipuke as team doctor, Nimrod Musongwa as physiotherapist, Luka Kaunda as video analyst, Nchimunya Mwila as security manager and 2009 CHAN Golden Boot winner Given Singuluma as equipment manager.

FAZ General Secretary Charles Chakatazya said the appointments followed a rigorous process aimed at identifying some of the country's best local coaching talent.

"The appointments have been made after a rigorous exercise that saw FAZ pick some of the best local coaching talents. Mbewe has been part of the Zambian youth system for some time having served as U15 and U20 coach over the years and knows his way around the current generation of players," Chakatazya said.

He said the technical bench had been given the immediate task of qualifying for the U-23 AFCON before turning its attention to the Olympics.

"He will be assisted by an equally competent ensemble of local coaches that we have tasked to firstly qualify to the U23 AFCON and subsequently the Olympics in 2028," he said.

Mbewe brings youth international experience to the position, having previously coached the Zambia Under-20 team that qualified for the 2023 Under-20 AFCON in Egypt.

Zambia have been handed a second-round tie against either Sierra Leone or Burkina Faso in the qualifiers for the 2027 U-23 AFCON.

Mbewe's side will enter the qualifiers at the second-round stage, with the first leg scheduled for November 9 and the return leg eight days later.

Zambia last qualified for the U-23 AFCON in 2019 in Egypt under coach Beston Chambeshi, but exited the tournament at the first-round stage.

The full technical bench:

Head Coach: Chisi Mbewe
1st Assistant Coach: Numba Mumamba
2nd Assistant Coach: George Chilufya
Goalkeeper Coach: Kalililo Kakonje
Physical Coach: Chintu Kampamba
Video Analyst: Luka Kaunda
Team Manager: Mumba Mwila
Team Doctor: Ndaba Sipuke
Physiotherapist: Nimrod Musongwa
Equipment Manager: Given Singuluma
Security Manager: Nchimunya Mwila

DAKAR 2026 YOUTH OLYMPIC FLAME LIT IN ATHENS AS HISTORIC JOURNEY TO AFRICA BEGINS

By IOC Media



The Youth Olympic flame for Dakar 2026 has been lit at the historic Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, Greece. This marks the start of its journey to Dakar in Senegal and another major milestone on the road to the first Olympic sporting event ever held on African soil.

The lighting of the Youth Olympic flame is one of the defining moments of any Youth Olympic Games (YOG). This edition, in particular, is historic, as it links Greece, the birthplace of the Olympic Games, with a new chapter in Olympic history, as the YOG head to Africa for the first time.

Lit using the sun's rays, in keeping with Olympic tradition, the flame was formally handed over to the Dakar 2026 Organising Committee before beginning its journey towards Dakar.

Dakar 2026 Ambassador and Senegalese Olympian Oumy Diop, also an Olympic Solidarity scholarship-holder, took part in the ceremony, representing the generation of young Senegalese and African athletes who will be at the heart of the YOG.

Reflecting on the significance of the milestone, IOC President Kirsty Coventry said:

In just a few weeks, Senegal will welcome young athletes from around the world for the first Olympic competition ever to be held on African soil. That is a proud moment for Senegal. And it is a proud moment for Africa. And it is going to open an important new chapter for the Olympic Movement.

TEMBO: I GREW UP WATCHING ZANACO

By Lucky Chama



Goalkeeper Jeban Tembo says joining Zanaco is a special moment for him after signing a two-season loan deal with the Bankers from Red Arrows.

Tembo officially joined Zanaco as the club continues to strengthen its squad ahead of the new season, bringing with him experience from his spells at FC MUZA, Kafue Celtic and other clubs.

The goalkeeper is also a former Zambia Under-20 and Under-23 national team player and earned individual recognition at the 2022 COSAFA Under-20 Championship in Eswatini, where he was named Best Goalkeeper of the Tournament.

Tembo said his move to Zanaco carries special significance because of his long-standing connection with the club.

"I am so happy to join Zanaco. This is the club I grew up watching when I was young, coming from Mtendere Township," Tembo said.

The goalkeeper said he was ready to contribute both on and off the pitch as Zanaco targets a successful campaign.

His arrival adds experience and competition to the Bankers' goalkeeping department as the club continues preparations for the upcoming season.

COPPER QUEENS READY FOR KENYA BATTLE

By Enock Phiri



Zambia will target glory in Kenya when the Copper Queens travel to Nairobi for the Africa Netball World Cup Qualifiers, with the ultimate prize being qualification for the 2027 Netball World Cup in Sydney, Australia.

Head coach Lazarous Tembo has trimmed his squad to 12 players from the 20-member provisional group that has been training at the NAPSA Sports Complex ahead of the tournament scheduled for September 19–26, 2026.

Experienced shooter Beauty Nakazwe will captain the side as Zambia seeks to secure a place at the global showpiece.

Tembo will be hoping his charges can reproduce the fighting spirit that helped Zambia win the 2023 Africa Netball Cup title in Botswana.

The Nairobi assignment is expected to provide a tougher challenge, with leading African netball nations, including Uganda and Malawi, also targeting qualification.

Assistant coach Robina Chibebe said the team is ready for the assignment and believes the players will give their best in Kenya.

"The girls are doing fine, they are training, they are ready. They are ready to perform in Kenya. We are going to perform well," Chibebe said.

She acknowledged the strength of the opposition Zambia will face, particularly Uganda and Malawi, but said the team would fight for one of the qualification places.

"Yes, we are going to try. We are going to try," she said.

Chibebe said the team was aware of the expectations from supporters, who want Zambia to qualify for the World Cup and compete strongly for continental honours.

"The fans are waiting for us to qualify for the World Cup and to win the Africa Cup. But we will try our all means so that we can do it," she said.

Tembo has selected a blend of experience and emerging talent, with the defensive unit expected to provide a solid foundation while the midcourt controls possession and creates opportunities for the shooters.

Nakazwe will lead the shooting department alongside Elizabeth Bwalya and Memory Mushanga, with efficiency under the post likely to be crucial against the continent's stronger sides.

ZAMBIA'S 12-MEMBER SQUAD

DEFENDERS
Memory Musonda
Esther Kunda
Idah Namonje
Faustina Mundia
Mule Mukela

MIDCOURT
Harriet Muchuma
Grace Sakala
Justina Mwale
Patricia Mukuni

SHOOTERS
Elizabeth Bwalya
Beauty Nakazwe — Captain
Memory Mushanga

With the squad now confirmed, the Copper Queens will shift their focus to Nairobi and the battle for qualification to Sydney 2027.