



ATLETICO BAG US\$40,000 MELBET SPONSORSHIP

ZPL National Division side Atletico Lusaka have signed a one-year sponsorship deal worth US\$40,000 with Melbet Zambia, with the partnership expected to support the club's long-term player development programme.....

pg 3



Atletico Lusaka founder and CEO Mauro Sanna says the club will not abandon its youth-development philosophy, insisting that Zambia's football future depends on giving genuine young talent a platform to grow...

pg 2

MUZALA TO RUN FOR US\$150,000

Zambia's Muzala Samukonga will race for the inaugural US\$150,000 men's 400m Ultimate Champion prize when he lines up against some of the world's best athletes at the World Athletics Ultimate Championship in Budapest, Hungary....

pg 5

200% FIRST DEPOSIT BONUS
OF UP TO 5,200 ZMW

REGISTER ON MELBET AND GET A
200% BONUS OF UP TO 5,200 ZMW
FOR YOUR FIRST DEPOSIT!

REGISTRATION



ATLETICO TAKES AIM AT ‘MADALAS’ IN YOUTH FOOTBALL

By Enock Phiri



Atletico Lusaka founder and CEO Mauro Sanna says the club will not abandon its youth-development philosophy, insisting that Zambia’s football future depends on giving genuine young talent a platform to grow.

Since the club was established in 2020, Atletico Lusaka have built their identity around identifying, developing and promoting young players a philosophy Sanna says will remain at the heart of the club despite the challenges that come with it.

“We are not going to change this. Our target is youth development,” Sanna said during the signing ceremony of Atletico Lusaka’s K800,000 sponsorship deal with Melbet.

Sanna admits Atletico see football differently from many clubs in Zambia, but believes that approach is necessary if the country is to build a stronger league and a competitive national team.

“I know we look at football differently from other clubs in Zambia. For us, we believe that in order to have a stronger national team and a strong league, we need young players real young players, not ‘madalas’ dressed as young players,” he said.

The comment may raise eyebrows, but Sanna says it reflects how seriously Atletico take player development.

“I know it is a very sensitive subject, but for us it is very important because there cannot be development without using young players. We understand the challenges that come with that.”

NATIONAL LEAGUE THE PERFECT PLATFORM

Sanna believes the National League currently provides Atletico with the ideal environment to continue their project.

“At the moment, the National League is the best scenario for us. It is the best moment and the best platform because we can use very young players,” he explained.

The club's philosophy is already beginning to produce movement, with Sanna revealing that several players are expected to leave for new opportunities.

“Every year we give away players, so very soon you will know where some of our main players will go. There are already some agreements done,” he revealed.

Some of the youngsters, however, are still too young to make moves outside Africa.

Sanna also revealed the extraordinary level of international interest that one unnamed Atletico youngster has already attracted.

“We had one in particular I won't mention the name yet. Three Spanish teams, two Italian teams, two Swiss teams and three Brazilian teams [were interested]. He won the heart of the Milan team, but unfortunately he wasn't good enough for the Under-17. That is another story,” Sanna said.

K800,000 DEAL TO BOOST SCOUTING

The new partnership with Melbet is expected to give Atletico greater capacity to expand their scouting network beyond Lusaka.

For Sanna, the deal is not simply about sponsorship. It is about finding the next generation of Zambian footballers.

“This deal is very important to the club because it will give us the possibility to go and scout even more players around the country,” he said.

Sanna believes Zambia is blessed with talent, but talent alone is not enough.

“I know they say there is talent in Zambia, but talent needs to be found and needs to be trained. For us, this is the main target with this partnership.”

With Melbet now on board, Atletico believe they can reach areas they previously could not access and identify more young players who could eventually make the transition to professional football.

‘WE PROMISE TO DO MORE’

Sanna says Atletico's youth-focused philosophy has already attracted attention beyond Zambia, and the club intends to build on that reputation with its new partner.

“We are going to give more platform to young players because now we will reach many places which we couldn't reach before,” he said.

“For us, our philosophy has made us popular even outside Zambia. We promise to do more with Melbet on board.”

For Atletico Lusaka, the ambition is clear: find young talent, develop it and create a pathway to the highest level.

And with a K800,000 sponsorship package now behind the project, Sanna believes the club has the resources to take that philosophy into a new phase.

ZAMBIAN MMA STAR DELIVERS ANOTHER STATEMENT PERFORMANCE AT EFC 137

By Enock Phiri



Zambia’s Tryford Mwanga is quickly turning heads in professional mixed martial arts after producing another emphatic first-round finish at EFC 137.

Known as Tryførd Hampende, Mwanga needed just 2 minutes and 56 seconds to bring the contest to an end, stopping his opponent with a ground-and-pound TKO.

The latest victory means the Zambian has now won both of his professional bouts, with both victories coming inside the opening round.

Mwanga’s latest performance once again highlighted the aggression, composure and finishing instinct that have marked the beginning of his professional career.

Rather than allowing the fight to develop into a prolonged contest, the Zambian imposed himself early and eventually found the finish through ground-and-pound, underlining his ability to turn pressure into a decisive result.

With a 2–0 professional record, Mwanga has made a near-perfect

start to life at the professional level.

Two fights have produced two victories.

Two victories have produced two first-round stoppages.

And that consistency is beginning to make the Zambian fighter an increasingly difficult name to overlook.

For Mwanga, EFC 137 was another opportunity to show that his first professional victory was no fluke.

He delivered again.

The challenge now will be to maintain that momentum as the level of competition rises, but the early signs are encouraging.

At just two professional fights into his career, Mwanga is already giving Zambian MMA fans plenty of reason to watch his progress closely.

Two fights. Two wins. Two first-round finishes.

Zambia has a new fighter to watch.

ATLETICO SIGN US\$40,000 MELBET DEAL

By Lucky Chama



ZPL National Division side Atletico Lusaka have signed a one-year sponsorship deal worth US\$40,000 with Melbet Zambia, with the partnership expected to support the club’s long-term player development programme.

Speaking on behalf of Atletico Lusaka, Public Relations Officer Mweni Mwansa said the agreement was more than a sponsorship deal, describing it as an opportunity for both parties to build a lasting partnership around the development of young Zambian footballers.

Mwansa said Atletico was established with a clear philosophy of identifying young talent, developing it, providing real opportunities and creating a pathway from Zambia into professional football at the highest level.

She said developing young players required more than simply finding them clubs, stressing the need for better coaching, facilities, technology, medical support, education, exposure and a stable professional environment.

“Atlético develops the talent,

Melbet supports the journey, and together we are going to build value that can grow far beyond one season,” Mwansa said.

She added that the club's objective was not simply to improve the team for one season, but to build a stronger and more sustainable football institution year after year.

Representing Melbet Zambia, Nachali Simukonda said the company was honoured to support Atletico Lusaka, adding that sport goes beyond competition by bringing people together, creating opportunities and inspiring communities.

Simukonda said the partnership would support the development of sport in Zambia and create exciting experiences for local families.

She added that Melbet shared Atletico's goals, values and vision both on and off the pitch, while encouraging responsible betting among adults aged 18 and above.

Meanwhile, Zambia Premier League Chief Executive Officer Joseph Chimpampwe welcomed the partnership, saying commercial investment was critical to the

professionalisation and development of Zambian football.

Chimpampwe said the league's motto was “Professionalise to commercialise”, explaining that professionalising the operational side of football should be followed by increased commercial investment into the game.

He said sponsorships such as the Melbet-Atletico partnership could help grow the commercial value and critical mass of football in Zambia.

Chimpampwe also praised Atletico for its development-oriented approach, saying the club was contributing to the growing number of Zambian players moving into international and European football.

He urged Atletico players to believe in themselves and continue working on their talent, noting that talent alone was not enough without continuous development and upskilling.

“Experience is not what you have. Experience is what you do with what you have,” Chimpampwe told the players.

CHIPATA GIRLS LOSE FOUR KEY PLAYERS

By FT Reporter



Chipata Girls Football Club have lost four key players on permanent transfers, with captain Jelina Kapalangwe leading the departures ahead of the new ZPL Women’s National League season.

Kapalangwe has joined Red Arrows Women’s Football Club, where she will reunite with former teammate Mwazona Sakala at the Zambia Air Force-sponsored Super League side.

The departure of the influential defender follows the earlier move of her predecessor as captain, Esther Mbewe, who has switched to Green Buffaloes Women’s Football Club.

Skillful defender Catherine Nyirenda has also joined Aguila Stars Women FC, while Agness Phiri has moved to Konkola Blades Queens.

The four players have left Chipata Girls with the full blessing of the club, which thanked them for their service and wished them well in their new challenges.

“We wish you the best as you embark on your new journey. Go and represent well the Ndise Tiliko Che Girls,” the club said in a message posted on its Facebook page.

With Kapalangwe and Mbewe no longer part of the squad, Gloria Kumwenda, who previously served as vice-captain, has been elevated to captain and will be deputised by Hildah Zulu.

But the player movement does not end there.

Chipata Girls president Chipangula Dube revealed that several other players have left the club on season-long loan deals as part of a wider movement of Eastern Province talent.

Sharon Sakala, popularly known as ‘Mbesuma’, left-back Mweene

Ngulube, Phelile Chilengi and Lexinah Ngoma have joined Nkwazi Queens on loan.

Josephine Ngoma has also moved to Provincial FAZ Women’s League side Mfuwe Mags Queens on a season-long loan.

Chipata Girls have, however, added defender Blessings Bwalya, formerly of Panzer Queens, to the squad.

Dube believes the movement of Eastern Province players to Nkwazi Queens could prove significant for the club’s ambitions.

The former Police Bullets FC (Chipata) coach says the acquisition of players from the province will be key to helping Nkwazi Queens compete for honours.

He has also challenged the players leaving Chipata Girls, both on permanent deals and loans, to embrace their new environments and make the most of the opportunities before them.

Meanwhile, preparations are intensifying among ZPL Women’s National League Southern Zone-2 sides ahead of the opening of the 2026 season on September 26.

Valley Queens will host Nkwazi Queens, while Panzer Queens will welcome ZedPro Sports Foundation at Gondar Barracks ground.

Chipata Girls, coached by Allan Pondani Mbewe, will face Chainda Bombers at Hillside School ground.

League newcomers Kum’mawa Stars Queens will be on a bye on the opening weekend.

For Chipata Girls, the challenge will be to rebuild quickly after losing a significant number of players while preparing for a new campaign under a new captain.



MBEWE DECLARES AIRMEN READY FOR FC ROUGE

By Enock Phiri



Red Arrows head coach Chisi Mbewe says his side is ready to complete the job against FC Rouge when the two teams meet in the second leg of the CAF Confederation Cup first preliminary round on Sunday.

The Airmen travelled to Mauritius carrying a 2–0 advantage from the first leg in Zambia, but Mbewe insists the tie is only halfway through.

Red Arrows departed Kenneth Kaunda International Airport on Friday morning aboard a South African Airways flight at 06h42 Zambian time and arrived in Mauritius at 16:52.

For Mbewe, the message to his players has been simple: do not relax.

“We only played the first half of this round and we are going there to play the second half. The job is not done yet,” Mbewe said.

The coach wants his players to remain defensively disciplined while being more ruthless when opportunities come their way.

“We just have to make sure we don’t concede. We just have to score,” he added.

MBEWE TRUSTS HIS PREPARATION

Although the return match will be played on neutral territory at the Côte d’Or National Sports Complex, Mbewe believes his team has prepared well for the challenge.

The Airmen have also been working on their tactical approach during training, with the coach now looking for his players to translate that preparation into performance.

“We have prepared very well for them. I just hope we implement what we prepared in training and apply the tactics we have been working on,” Mbewe said.

The Red Arrows camp has also received a boost, with no injury concerns reported among the players who featured in the first leg.

SILILO WARNS AGAINST COMPLACENCY

Red Arrows Director of Sports Col Maureen Sililo has delivered a similar warning to the players.

Sililo, who is accompanying the team in Mauritius, says the two-goal advantage should not create a false sense of security.

“We should not be complacent. We should not be satisfied with the two goals that we are going with. We should treat it as a new game altogether and win outright,” she said.

She added that the Zambia Air Force Command had provided the team with the necessary support and now expects the technical bench and players to deliver.

“Command has expressed nothing but are looking forward to a positive result. They have supported us with everything, so it is up to us now to record a success on this assignment,” Sililo said.

The match will kick off at 13:00 CAT.

MUTAPA DEMANDS FAST START AS POWER CHASE COMEBACK

By Lucky Chama



Power Dynamos enter Saturday’s CAF Champions League return leg against Al Merreikh with little room for caution. Trailing 1–0 from the first leg in Kigali, coach Oswald ‘Mourinho’ Mutapa believes the tie could be decided by how quickly his side imposes itself on the game.

Mutapa’s call for Power to start “like a house on fire” is more than a demand for early attacking intent. It reflects a recognition that the Zambian side cannot afford another slow opening if it is to overturn the deficit.

Power Dynamos struggled to establish themselves during the opening 15 to 20 minutes of the first leg, a period in which Al Merreikh were able to settle into the contest and eventually secure the advantage.

The return leg presents a different tactical environment.

Playing at home, Power have the opportunity to dictate the tempo from the outset. But that advantage also brings pressure. The longer Al Merreikh remain level on the night, the greater the burden could become on the home side to find the goals required to change the aggregate score.

Mutapa, however, believes Power have enough resources to turn the tie around.

“We are down one zero but not out, we have 90 minutes to get the result that we need.”

That belief is important because Power do not necessarily need to chase the tie recklessly from the first minute. What Mutapa appears to be demanding is authority — controlling the game, applying pressure and making their intentions clear early.

The key question is whether that aggression can be matched with composure.

A comeback requires Power to

score, but throwing numbers forward without control could create opportunities for Al Merreikh to exploit spaces in transition. The challenge for Mutapa will therefore be finding the balance between the urgency of needing a result and the discipline required over 90 minutes.

The first goal could prove particularly significant.

If Power score early, the momentum could shift decisively in their favour. But if Al Merreikh withstand the initial pressure, frustration could begin to grow and potentially force Power into taking greater risks.

There is also a wider significance attached to the match.

Mutapa views Power’s campaign, together with that of fellow Zambian representatives Red Arrows, as part of the country’s broader effort to improve its continental standing and work towards regaining lost CAF slots.

“A very important game for the team, for the fans and for the country at large.”

That makes Saturday’s contest bigger than simply a battle for the next round. For Power, progression would strengthen their continental campaign while also contributing to Zambia’s broader ambitions.

Ultimately, Power Dynamos have a simple equation at Levy Mwanawasa Stadium: they must overturn a one-goal deficit.

How they attempt to do that could determine the outcome.

Mutapa wants the response to begin from the first whistle.

“We have to stamp our authority on the game.”

Power Dynamos host Al Merreikh on Saturday at 15h00, knowing that 90 minutes stand between them and the next round.

INAKI WILLIAMS ENDS GHANA NATIONAL TEAM CAREER

By FT Reporter

Ghana forward Inaki Williams has announced his decision to bring his international career with the Black Stars to an end.

Williams made the announcement in a statement published on his Facebook page, saying he leaves the national team with pride and peace of mind, knowing that he gave everything whenever he represented Ghana.

“I feel the time has come to bring my journey with the Ghana national team to an end,” Williams wrote.

The forward said his time with Ghana had given him much more than football, particularly the opportunity to reconnect with his roots and experience the pride of representing the country.

“Ghana has given me much more than football. It has allowed me to come back home, feel even closer to my roots and experience the enormous pride of representing my country and wearing this flag on my chest.”

Williams also expressed gratitude to everyone who had supported him throughout his international journey, thanking fans and those who had been part of his time with the Black Stars.



He said Ghana would remain a permanent part of his identity despite his decision to step away from international football.

“Ghana will always be a part of me. I will continue supporting the Black Stars as one of you, wherever I am.”

Williams ended his message with a final expression of gratitude to his country.

“Medaase. Always Ghana.”

The 32-year-old Athletic Bilbao forward made 28 appearances for Ghana from 2022-2026 with two goals.

Williams scored his first goal on 17 November 2023, in a 1–0 win over Madagascar in a 2026 World Cup qualifier. He was called up for the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations in Ivory Coast (played in January 2024).

On 2 June 2026, Williams was included in Carlos Queiroz’s squad for this year’s World Cup.

MUZALA TO RUN FOR US\$150,000

By Lucky Chama



Zambia’s Muzala Samukonga will race for the inaugural US\$150,000 men’s 400m Ultimate Champion prize when he lines up against some of the world’s best athletes at the World Athletics Ultimate Championship in Budapest, Hungary.

The Olympic bronze medallist is among the elite field selected to compete at the championship, which runs from 11–13 September 2026.

Samukonga’s inclusion represents further recognition of his status

among the leading 400m runners in the world, following his Olympic bronze-medal success.

The Zambian will face a formidable field that includes Botswana’s world and Diamond League champion Collen Kebinatshipi, Great Britain’s Olympic silver medallist Matthew Hudson-Smith, Trinidad and Tobago’s Jereem Richards and USA’s Rai Benjamin.

South Africa’s Zakithi Nene and Botswana’s Bayapo Ndori are also listed among the competitors,

alongside Jacory Patterson, Khaleb McRae, Chris Bailey, Lee Eppie, Attila Molnár, Christopher Morales Williams, Jonas Phijffers, Yuki Joseph Nakajima, Muhammad Abdallah Kounta and Patrik Simon Enyingi.

With such depth in the field, Samukonga faces a demanding battle simply to secure a place in the final.

The championship brings together Olympic champions, world champions, Diamond League winners and leading athletes selected through the world rankings, placing Samukonga in another major test against the strongest competition in his event.

For the Zambian, the opportunity is also financially significant.

The winner of the men’s 400m will be crowned the inaugural Ultimate Champion and take home US\$150,000, while second place earns US\$75,000 and third place US\$40,000.

The prize money forms part of the championship’s overall US\$10 million prize fund, with every participating athlete guaranteed prize money.

For Samukonga, however, the bigger prize is the opportunity to measure himself against the very best.

FOLOKO GRADUATES WITH A DISTINCTION FROM MEMOS WITH A GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR ZAMBIAN SPORT

By NOCZ Media



The National Olympic Committee of Zambia (NOCZ) congratulates its President, Alfred Foloko, on graduating today in Olympia, Greece, following his successful completion of MEMOS XXVIII, the 2025–2026 Executive Masters in Sport Organisations Management programme.

His programme journey began in Lausanne, Switzerland, followed by sessions in Hammamet, Tunisia, and Bucharest, Romania, before concluding in Olympia, the birthplace of the ancient Olympic Games.

Supported by Olympic Solidarity, MEMOS helps professionals working in national and international sports organisations develop their management knowledge. Participants combine

international learning with an applied project addressing an organisational challenge. The curriculum includes governance, strategic management, finance, leadership, marketing, and project and event management.

As part of the programme, President Foloko developed a project titled “Governance Framework for National Federations Affiliated with the National Olympic Committee of Zambia (NOCZ),” under the guidance of Dr. Donald Rukare, President of Commonwealth Sport and of the Uganda Olympic Committee amongst other portfolios.

The project examines governance practices among affiliated federations and proposes practical standards and tools to support

consistent improvement. Its research drew on 42 respondents, including federation presidents, general secretaries and other officials, together with a review of governance documents.

The study identified positive foundations in transparency and democratic processes, alongside areas requiring further support. These included internal controls, board evaluation, conflict-of-interest procedures, governance skills and training, and the participation of athletes and women. The findings reflect the participating officials’ reported experiences and provide a basis for targeted improvement.

MULENGA QUESTIONS ZAMBIA’S YOUTH FOOTBALL STRATEGY

By Lucky Chama



Former Zambia international winger and 2007 CAF Young Player of the Year Clifford Mulenga has questioned Zambia’s approach to youth football development, calling for a long-term strategy built around continuity, coaching development and a clear player pathway.

Mulenga says Zambia risks treating youth national teams as short-term projects that are assembled when tournaments approach, rather than as part of a structured system for developing the country’s next generation of footballers.

“Do we actually have a national youth football development strategy in Zambia or do we simply assemble teams whenever there is a tournament?” Mulenga asked.

He has also questioned the practice of having three to four sitting Premier League head coaches simultaneously serving as coaches of youth national teams.

Mulenga stressed that his concerns are not about the quality of the coaches involved, but rather about the structure and continuity of the national youth setup.

“It is about the structure, the vision and the continuity,” he said.

According to Mulenga, Zambia’s youth teams should form a connected development pathway, with the Under-17 team preparing players for the Under-20, while the Under-20 should feed into the Under-23 and eventually the senior national team.

He believes this requires a recognisable football philosophy, a coaching pathway and technical continuity across the different age groups.

“There should be people whose primary responsibility is developing Zambia’s next generation of footballers,” Mulenga said.

He argues that the current approach can sometimes resemble a cycle where a coach is appointed ahead of a tournament, prepares the team, competes, and then the process starts again once the tournament ends.

“WHERE IS THE LONG-TERM PLAN?” he asked.

Mulenga has further challenged Zambian football authorities to give grassroots coaches greater opportunities to work at national and international level, arguing that these coaches spend years working with young players and should have a pathway to experience the national team environment.

He also questioned what it means for Zambia’s youth coaching ecosystem if the preferred solution for every youth national team is to appoint a sitting senior club head coach.

“If our best solution for every youth national team is to take a sitting head coach from a senior club, what does that say about the development of our own national youth coaching ecosystem?” he asked.

For Mulenga, the issue goes beyond coaches and results. He believes Zambia must examine whether it is genuinely developing coaches, players and a distinct football identity.

“Are we developing coaches? Are we developing players? Are we developing a football identity? Or are we simply trying to win the next tournament?” he questioned.

He argues that winning a youth tournament should not be the ultimate measure of success because competition results are only one part of player development.

“Winning a youth tournament is an event. Developing a generation of footballers is a system,” Mulenga said.

He believes the debate should therefore move away from simply asking who is coaching a youth national team and instead focus on why that person has been appointed, what the objective is, where a player is expected to be in five years and who is responsible for helping him get there.

“That, for me, is the real Chronicle,” Mulenga said.

“What exactly are we building?”