

Coca-Cola South Africa
news
release

**19 AFRICAN COUNTRIES REPRESENTED AT COPA COCA-COLA INTER-
AFRICA FOOTBALL STARS TOURNAMENT**

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The top junior talent from 19 African countries will be in action during the COPA Coca-Cola Football Stars Inter-Africa tournament to be decided in Kathlehong early June.

“The tournament is growing in stature every year and has now earned its reputation as the most prestigious competition for Under-18 players on the continent,” says Sammy Mohlaoli, Senior Communications Manager of Coca-Cola South Africa, the sponsors of the tournament.

Last year’s winners, the junior Super Eagles of Nigeria, will be back to defend their title. Also included in the line-up will be the Tanzanian and Kenyan sides that impressed with the quality of their play and talent at the 2009 tournament.

Angola, one of the powerhouses of African football will be represented for the first time when the draw takes place on 4 June. Other national teams making their debut are Lesotho and Swaziland.

South Africa, the losing finalists in 2009, has selected a strong side following this year’s COPA Coca-Cola Tournament in which 51 000 players from 3 000 schools in all nine provinces participated. The local team is dominated by players from the top teams that contested the national finals earlier this month in Alexandra namely Johannesburg Secondary School, Seiphemelo from North West and Harmony from the Free State.

Returning to compete in this year’s COPA Coca-Cola Inter-Africa tournament are Uganda, Namibia, Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Malawi while players from Mozambique, Burundi, Madagascar, Rwanda, Mauritius and the Congo will make up an Africa Invitational Team.

The COPA Coca-Cola enjoys the support of both the SA Football Association (SAFA) and the SA Schools Football Association (SASFA). Speaking at the national finals, SAFA President, Kirsten Nematandani, said it is “a shining example of how Coca-Cola and SAFA collaboratively aim to develop the youth of South Africa through football”.

The COPA Coca-Cola introduces a unique blend of quality competition and life-skills development into the junior football environment. Apart from the daily matches the players will also participate in a range of activities to develop their leadership qualities and broaden their understanding of issues such as sports nutrition, strength and fitness training and psychological preparation.

This training will be provided in collaboration with the High Performance Centre and the University of Pretoria.

“The COPA Coca-Cola Football Stars Tournament is an example of Coca-Cola’s commitment to the development of the youth of Africa,” says Mohlaoli. “We want to develop the next generation of top quality players on the continent but we also want to equip them with knowledge and skills that will last throughout their lives.”

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The Coca-Cola Company

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