

# **The Natal Inter-Race Soccer Tournament of the 1950s: Reinforcing or Undermining Race Identities?**

By

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**I, Mphumeleli Aubrey Ngidi (206516128), hereby declare that this is my own work and that all sources that I have used have been acknowledged and referenced. No part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author and are in no way represent those of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The dissertation has not been presented to any other University for examination, either in the Republic of South Africa or overseas.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **The Inter-Race Tournament of the 1950s: Reinforcing or Undermining Race Identities**

This dissertation focuses on the inter-race soccer tournament which was held in Natal between 1946 and 1960 under the auspices of the Natal-Inter-Race Soccer Board. The tournament was played between Coloured, Indian and African teams chosen from players across Natal. The tournament was played at an important time in African-Indian relations in the province. This was a time of growing tension on the ground between ordinary Indians and Africans as well as political co-operation across racial lines. This thesis provides a narrative history of the tournament and, as such, makes an important contribution to the historiography of soccer in South Africa. None of the major works on South African history focus on this tournament and, in fact, get some of the details wrong. This thesis provides the results, some outstanding players and administrators, playing styles, as well as the importance of sport as a source of power and patronage for Black sports administrators, which explains the reluctance of some to embrace non-racialism. The story of the Natal-Inter-Race Soccer Board and its tournament makes a valuable contribution to the growing field of the historiography of South Africa soccer.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to acknowledge my debt to several people who assisted me in completing this dissertation:

Firstly, Professor Goolam Vahed, my supervisor: for his advice, devotion and endless gratefulness in motivating me to combine my love of sport, especially soccer, and history. Without him I would not have moved an inch towards completing this Masters degree. Bravo Prof, thank you for your assistance. The dignified manner in which you care for your student researchers deserve to be emulated.

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Thirdly, I would also like to thank my father, Petros Nkosiya Ngidi, for his efforts and thrust on me to kick-start my university career. The families of Ngidi, Nduli, Phewa and Dlomo families had valuable motivation to my upbringing, unconditional love and achievements. My maternal and paternal brothers, sisters and cousins your presence is a present to my survival.

Everyone who is part of my life, friends and people I meet along the way, all of you deserve unconditional credit to my accomplishments. Thank You.

**MPHUMELELI A. NGIDI**

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my late mother, Thokozisile Mavis Nduli, who tragically died in July 2011, the year I completed my first-ever undergraduate degree. You never reaped the fruits that you watered for 23 years but I know that wherever you are you are proud of the blossoming tree that you unwillingly left. All credit of my achievements should go to you. You are a woman who went through all the pain, travelled a thorny pathway and committed her utmost to grow me from a boy to a man that I am today. I salute your gratitude and will forever be thankful of your endeavours and I know that whenever you look down you smile. May your ever-present spirit give me more strength for more success. Mother, you are gone but never forgotten.

To my only maternal brother, the late Sphamandla Ian Nduli, who also died tragically in March 2012, my achievements are your achievements; may your soul rest in peace. To your child, Sinodumo Nduli, this is for you, grow up and achieve more than what my brother and mother wished me to achieve.

## **NOTES ON SOURCES USED**

This study has used the Chicago Style of Referencing. Out of the two styles of referencing under the Chicago style I have chosen to use the “notes and bibliography system.” The other one is called the author-date system. The chosen style, that is, the “notes and bibliography system” is a suitable style for humanities courses as it uses notes, either footnotes or endnotes, in the body of the paper and a bibliography at the end of the paper.

My primary sources have been newspapers since the majority, if not all, of the matches, including previews and reviews, were reported on print media. Finding information pertinent to the Natal Inter-race soccer matches on the newspapers was not the easiest of tasks as the dissertation focus era is an earliest period from 1940s to the 1960s. Some newspapers that would have furnished the dissertation with extensive information were either not available or did not publish affairs related to the tournament. For example, *The Bantu World*, a newspaper founded in the early 1930s for black middle-class elite, only reported on the events occurring in Transvaal. However though, on a lighter note, *Ilanga LaseNatali* and *The Leader* came into my rescue as both newspapers had information, *albeit* not all, such as match reports, previews, reviews, and match-day squads and other information relating to the Natal Inter-Race Soccer Tournament. *The Graphic*, an Indian-oriented newspaper, also provided me with far-reaching, though not all embracing, information from 1952 onwards. Columnists provided in-depth information than match reports; they opened up new dimensions of the tournament and were sharp-sighted and satisfactorily attentive in unearthing essential information. Examples of columnists “discoveries” includes their observations that the inter-race matches were not serving the purpose of integrating races but disintegrating them instead. The columnists, and newspapers, played a leading role in the removal of “race” from various sport codes.

The chief difficulty concerned little information on Coloureds. Information on Coloureds in Natal had not been a major topic in the newspapers that I found in my disposal. This may have likely been caused by the estimated small Coloured’s population in Natal as compared to the Cape Colony. My attempts to solicit information on Natal Coloureds on newspapers drew blank because the Coloureds population, according to my findings, had no newspapers specifically dealing with their affairs such as *The Natal Mercury*, *Daily News*, *Natal Witness*, etc. for Whites, *The Graphic*, *The Leader*, *The Indian Opinion*, etc. for Indians and *Ilanga LaseNatali* for Africans. This limited my research on the extensive information, on and off

the field, of Coloured players, the Natal Coloureds FA annual general meetings and other affairs concerning Coloureds. Without the availability of the newspapers that I used in this dissertation in archive centres such as The Documentation Centre in UKZN Westville campus, The Killie Campbell Collections in Musgrave, The Bessie Head Library in Pietermaritzburg and Don African Library this research would not have materialised as its majority of information was published on newspapers. I thank the supervisor, the discipline of Historical studies lecturers and the working staff at the above-mentioned archive centres for helping me to locate the newspapers and find other information.

One other problem was inadequate information on the annual general meetings of the three bodies which were affiliates of the NISB. The AGM's of the NISB were not fully published themselves. I had to dig deep to find such information from other newspapers with the exception of *The Leader* which reported, though not in full sometimes, on most of the NISB meetings. I would have welcomed full reasons on the 1949 NISB AGM so as I would have unearthed the in-inner depth reasons on why the tournament had to be cancelled in that respective year. The reason of: 'because of 1949 race riots' in Durban was, I assume, not satisfactory enough.

The other limitation to my research was that though the tournament was the foremost soccer tournament in its heydays there is little scholarly works written about the NISB tournament. This limitation was also a limitation to my wish of incorporating the role of women during the tenure of the tournament. There was little information provided on women except that, in some cases, were attendees in the matches. In the preliminary stages of my research I have identified interviews as one source of information that I would gather to necessitate an extensive analysis of my research. This consideration was not achieved because I could not find people who have attended, were part or who held positions during the helm of these matches except those who voiced their opinions in the respective newspapers. I had to subsequently withdraw the interview element on my research proposal.

I anticipated biased reporting in the preliminary stages of the research hence I had to compare and contrast more than one version of reporting to reach the inference, sometimes a conclusion, of various arguments in the dissertation.

Newspapers did not only provide factual information but also shape public opinion. Aside from getting the "facts" about the tournament from the newspapers, it was interesting to note

that these papers reported on events differently. For example, *Ilanga LaseNatali's* ownership was conservative politically; it sided with the Africans. While I wrote the dissertation I was aware of this but at the same time maintaining the focus of the thesis which is on recovering the history of a neglected black sporting event in the context of the political events taking place at the time, and not to deconstruct discourses of race in the newspapers and how these shaped public.



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## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction: The power of sport to unite**

I have never kicked a soccer ball but I am a soccer fanatic.

On almost every occasion that I get involved in a discussion about a particular soccer match my friends invariably ask: “What do you know about soccer?” Why do people always ask me this question? It is probably because they know that I have never kicked a ball in any “official” match (I am what you might call an “arm-chair” critic) and because my small frame does not have “sports appeal”, if there is such a thing.

**BUT I LOVE SOCCER: I LIVE SOCCER; I EAT SOCCER; I BREATHE SOCCER.**

My name is Mphumeleli Ngidi; a Zulu name which literally translates to “success” or “a person who accomplishes whatever he does”. My late mother, who died in July 2011, told me that I was born prematurely in October 1987, the year of the great floods, at King Edward VIII Hospital in Durban. She named me Mphumeleli because she wanted me to break the zygote of “prematurity” and grow into strength and manhood.

I grew up in the dusty areas of what was then a rural setting, in eMatabetule, eMatikwe and eMaphephethweni, near Inanda, on the outskirts of the northern part of Durban. Although these areas are not fully developed today, they are much better than when I was growing up. With the exception of eMatikwe, there was no electricity, water or tarred roads. The children in those areas now have access to electronic media, schools with laboratories and computers, etc.; things we never dreamt of. We did have soccer, though. It was the only sport that males participated in. Soccer was so popular that it attracted people from surrounding communities, including girls and women who came to watch. Fortunately for me I lived not far from the main stadium, Mqhawe Soccer Ground (Mqhawe was a former Qadi king who inherited the chieftainship from his father, Dabeka). Some had to travel long distances to the stadium for the Sunday league which comprised of 15 teams and was played from February to December.

There are now three stadiums for the league, Mqhawe, kwaDlokwakhe and kwaDabeka. The Mqhawe ground is located on one of the few gentle slopes in this mountainous area, just opposite the Department of Home Affairs. KwaDabeka is located at Mzinyathi (the house of

the buffalos), the headquarters of the Qadi nation, where the current chieftain, Mqoqi Ngcobo resides. The other kings are reported to have resided in the same area. When I lived there Mzonjani Ngcobo was the king of the Qadi nation. Close to the Mqhawe grounds is Hlengimpilo Primary where I enrolled in grade one in 1994, the year of South Africa's first democratic elections. I transferred to Mcetshwa Primary School in Maphephethweni for grades two to four before returning to Hlengimpilo.

My late mother's family lived in EMatabetule. They are all gone now: the grandparents that I never knew, two uncles, three aunts, my mother and the only brother I had, Sphamandla. At eMaphephethweni, I stayed with a large family to whom I was not related. The years from 1987 to 1994 had little to do with soccer. Although small, I survived the pre-election political violence between supporters of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The family with whom I lived with went by the name of Dlomo and I herded cattle with a number of boys roughly my age. My mother, who was a domestic worker from the age of 13 until her death in 2011, brought home all sorts of old, discarded balls from her workplace - soccer balls, tennis balls, cricket balls and even rugby balls. These would be confiscated by the elders because they were "disturbing" me from my assigned duties such as fetching water, cleaning the yard, being sent to the shop, and so forth. To my surprise, the boys from the family would be given the balls to play with whilst I was performing my "duties". That I never got to play the balls my mother so lovingly brought home partly explains why I never became a sportsperson of any kind.

However, I did find time to watch football. Since there was no electricity we would watch soccer matches on a black and white television plugged into a battery similar to a car battery. I used to charge it at a nearby store. I was always the first to check that the battery was charged as I did not want to miss a match. If it was not, I would listen to the commentary to Radio Ukhozi Fm. My love for football blossomed from 1995 to 1997, but even as a young boy I took a liking to Kaizer Chiefs. I think it was because I fell in love with their black and gold jerseys. I also loved the cool and calm Neil Tovey and by 1997 was a big fan of Doctor Khumalo when he returned from a stint abroad. When the elders asked which team I followed, I replied: *mina ngithanda iKaizer "Chips"* (I love Kaizer "Chips"). It was always "Chips" instead of Chiefs for me and I was quite embarrassed when I realised my error much later in life. I have never flirted with another team. Everyone knew that Mpumezana, the

name they affectionately called me by, was a Chiefs fan. This got me into trouble with rival Orlando Pirates fans but I stood my ground against young and old “Buccaneers”.

My fondest memory during this period is Bafana Bafana winning the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) in 1996 with a team that included two of my all-time favourite Chiefs players, Doctor Khumalo and Lucas Radebe. I was devastated when Lucas left to play for Leeds United in England. Bafana was managed by the eccentric, always optimistic Clive Barker who had superb motivational skills. The memory of that victory will never leave me. Almost all the newspapers and radios reported on Bafana Bafana; everyone knew these national heroes and everyone celebrated soccer. The team’s continental victory made soccer even more popular, even in the most remote parts of the country.

I was a soccer fanatic by then. I would ask my mother to buy me crayons and an exercise book so that I could draw the Bafana Bafana players with their Kappa kit. I read every copy of *Ilanga* newspaper and viewed players’ profiles and pictures in *Drum* magazine. I could not read properly and was only interested in the pictures. I could not tell who had won the league or Cup but I knew when Chiefs won and would be totally happy. The cover of my exercise book was filled with pictures of Bafana Bafana and Chiefs players. I knew each and every game that Chiefs was going to play and the score. Sometimes I would dodge cattle herding to watch the matches at friends’ homes. Even now I vividly remember incidents from the mid-1990s. The match between Congo and Bafana Bafana in which the South African players were intimidated by soldiers, bullied by the other team and Mark Fish was injured is etched in my memory. Doctor Khumalo’s outstretched leg blocked the ball for Philemon Masinga to score the goal which took the team to the 1998 World Cup in France. This was a dream come true. Luckily, I went to stay with my aunt at Matikwe. She had electricity and I could watch the games on television. My growth as a passionate soccer fan climaxed with the hosting of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

The soccer bug has never left me and I am happy that I can now combine my love of soccer and my passion for history in this study.

As far as race is concerned, I received mixed signals growing up as a child. In my area, I only interacted with African people. We enjoyed few material comforts. Although my mother performed menial work for a non-African family, she took pride in her work and never

complained about her employers. At the same time, I saw whites and Blacks (including Indians and Coloureds) mixing freely on the soccer field. One of my beloved Chiefs' greatest players was the striker Jimmy "Brixton Towers" Joubert, while Bafana Bafana had whites such as coach Clive Barker, captain Neil Tovey, midfield enforcer Eric Tinkler, and Mark "Feeeeeeeeeeeeeeesh" Fish, a crowd favourite. They bonded as a team, celebrated victories together, and lamented defeats. However, it seemed as though almost all the supporters were black. At this time, I also saw Nelson Mandela, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other Black leaders on television. It was only in my teenage years when I studied our country's history at school and spoke to my elders that I realized what a racially divided country we were, and still are, and how troubled our past was.

This study presents a glimpse into "race relations" in apartheid South Africa.

### **The present study**

In a unique occurrence, the South African national soccer and rugby teams played on the same field for the first time at the FNB Stadium, on 17 August 2013. Bafana Bafana defeated Burkina Faso while the Springboks beat Argentina. These matches were held in honour of former president, Nelson Mandela who famously wore the Number 6 Springbok Jersey when the Springboks won the 1995 Rugby World Cup. Victory in the World Cup and the countrywide joy that accompanied it marked the birth of the "Rainbow Nation". It was hoped that sport would help the country achieve its dream of non-racialism. However, South Africa appears to be more divided than ever along race, ethnic, gender, class, and other divides. This thesis is not concerned with this issue; rather, it focuses on an earlier period, when sports administrators also had great faith in the power of sport to unite South Africans through an inter-race soccer tournament.<sup>1</sup>

Peter Alegi writes that soccer,<sup>2</sup> an "imported" sport, 'came to be a mainstay of black sporting experience' in South Africa, an anti-apartheid dynamic and part of the popular culture of the

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<sup>1</sup> While it is accepted that race is not a biological fact, there is no denying that it is a social fact in South Africa and has historically had grave consequences. For the purposes of this thesis, "Indian" refers to migrants and their descendants from the Indian sub-continent; "African" refers to the indigenous population; "Coloureds" refers to people of mixed heritage; and "white" refers to the descendants of settlers from Europe. "Black", a term that had political significance from the late 1960s, is used for the earlier period to refer to Indians, Africans and Coloureds collectively.

<sup>2</sup> What the Americans call football is called soccer in most parts of the world. "Soccer" is used in this dissertation because this is how the local newspapers refer to the sport.

indigenous African population.<sup>3</sup> This thesis focuses on a little-known but ‘popular’ annual soccer tournament known as the Natal Inter-race Soccer Tournament held in Natal from 1946 to 1960, against the background of African-Indian relations, and in particular, the attempt by political and social elites to foster contact between Africans and Indians.

An online search on ‘South African football’ found a reference to the tournament on South African History Online website. This merely states that the Inter-Race Board was established with the help of Albert Luthuli and that its matches were “popular”. The matches themselves are not covered nor is there even a brief history of the tournament which was played under the auspices of the Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board (NISB), established in 1946. The NISB comprised of delegates from the Natal Indian Football Association (NIFA), Natal African Football Association (NAFA), and Natal Coloured Football Association (NCFA). The NISB’s offices were located in Durban and its officials were elected at Annual General Meetings (AGMs). Not only did the Board organise the tournament among Natal teams but every few years it selected a mixed-race team comprising of Indian, African, and Coloured players, to play against a similar team from the Transvaal, where an Inter-Race Soccer Board had been formed in 1935. These games attracted large multiracial (some would prefer the term “non-racial”) crowds.

From the time that Indians arrived in Natal as indentured workers in 1860, contact between them and Africans was mainly negative in nature. On the sugar plantations where the indentured workers were employed, Africans were often placed in supervisory positions and used by the white “master” to administer corporal punishment. When Indians and Africans moved to the cities from the 1920s and 1930s they competed for houses and jobs; Africans were also tenants of Indian landlords, customers in their shops, and passengers on Indian-owned buses. This economic competition became racialised over time, and led to conflict in the form of the January 1949 race riots in Durban.<sup>4</sup> These coincided with an attempt by the ANC, Natal Indian Congress (NIC) and Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) to cooperate politically. The period from the late 1940s to the end of 1950s was a busy one as the ANC

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*. (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004), 1.

<sup>4</sup> See Edwards, I. and Nuttall, T. "Seizing the Moment: the January 1949 Riots, Proletarian Populism and the Structures of African urban life in Durban during the late 1940s". Paper presented at History Workshop on "Structure and Experience in the Making of Apartheid," University of Witwatersrand, 6-10 February, 1990.

organised non-racial, non-violent protests against the National Party's (NP) apartheid policies. The NP came to power in 1948.<sup>5</sup>

One of the key concerns of this thesis is whether or not soccer became 'a shared cultural medium through which people involved in formal and informal social groups connected across racial, economic, ethnolinguistic and political lines' during the first decade of apartheid.<sup>6</sup>

While many studies have described the friction between Indians and Africans, there was also contact among elites in the 1950s in politics, journalism (for example *Drum* magazine), music (Lionel Pillay married Miriam Makeba), and at dance clubs.<sup>7</sup> This thesis focuses specifically on cross race contact in soccer, which, historically, had been played along racially segregated lines. Through the Natal Inter-race Soccer Tournament, soccer administrators, who were mainly professionals or business people, encouraged interaction among Indians, Africans, and Coloureds on the sports field and as spectators, thus challenging apartheid ideology.

Together with the Reverend Bernard Sigamoney, a Natal-born Indian Anglican pastor from Johannesburg, Nkosi Albert Luthuli was a key promoter of the NISB. They organised an annual competition between African, Indian and Coloured teams in Natal.<sup>8</sup> In the Transvaal, Indian, African, and Coloured football teams competed for the Godfrey Trophy and from 1952 to 1966 a biennial national inter-race tournament called the A.I. Kajeje Cup was organised under the aegis of the South African Soccer Federation (SASF).<sup>9</sup>

This thesis examines the tournament in Natal, focusing on who the organisers were, what motivated them, how many tournaments were held, how teams were selected, the results, great players and outstanding administrators, and how spectators responded to the matches.

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<sup>5</sup> Gail Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa. The Evolution of an Ideology*. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 160-169.

<sup>6</sup> Alegi, *Laduma!*, 87.

<sup>7</sup> Karen Flint's work on Indian-African medical interactions and polyculturalism (2008) offers useful theoretical and historiographical insight. See also Jon Soske, "Wash Me Black Again: African Nationalism, the Indian Diaspora, and KwaZulu-Natal," (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2009), Retrieved on various occasions between December 2012 and March 2013.

[https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/19234/1/Soske\\_Jon\\_D\\_200911\\_PhD\\_thesis.pdf](https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/19234/1/Soske_Jon_D_200911_PhD_thesis.pdf).

<sup>8</sup>See the Inkosi Albert Luthuli Museum's website:<http://www.luthulimuseum.org.za/the-news/77-soccer-humanised-us-chief-albert-luthuli-and-the-beautiful-game>.

<sup>9</sup> Alegi, *Laduma!*, 108-109.

While the focus is a detailed narrative history of the tournament, one of the concerns is whether or not the tournament succeeded in creating cross-race contact among players, administrators and spectators, and, if so, its impact. My working hypothesis is that when people live in conditions where race continues to divide them, this reinforces racial identity. In the context of the tournament, for example, this suggests that because players represented specific race groups and spectators most likely supported “their” race groups, this reinforced rather than decreased racial identity.

### *Literature Review*

This dissertation draws on two types of studies on Natal. The first concerns soccer in the region. There is only one significant work on the subject, Peter Alegi’s *Laduma!* (2004) which focuses on soccer at a national level, while Leo Kuper’s *African Bourgeoisie* (1965) make reference to soccer amongst Africans in Natal.<sup>10</sup> Merrett (2008) and Desai *et al* (2002) have also conducted studies on sport in KwaZulu-Natal.<sup>11</sup> The 2010 World Cup spawned a host of studies on soccer in South Africa, most of which focus on the political and economic issues pertaining to that tournament.<sup>12</sup> Studies of soccer and sport in general, in apartheid South Africa have tended to focus on the politics of sport; particularly on international attempts to use sports boycotts to isolate the apartheid regime.<sup>13</sup>

Surprisingly, Alegi’s *Laduma!*, only mentions the tournament in passing and provides little information on provincial or national inter-race tournaments and the political issues surrounding them, even though these were path-breaking initiatives. Kuper’s study contains just one paragraph on the tournament. As far as I am aware, there is no recorded history of the tournament(s). Even I, an avid soccer fan, knew nothing about this tournament until I met with my supervisor to discuss a topic for my Masters research and began reading about soccer in Natal. My friends had also not heard about this tournament.

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<sup>10</sup> See Alegi, *Laduma!*, and Leo Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie. Race, Class and Politics in South Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

<sup>11</sup> See Christopher Merrett. *Sport, Space and Segregation: Politics and Society in Pietermaritzburg*. (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008); and Ashwin Desai and Goolam Vahed. *Monty Naicker. Between Reason and Treason*. (Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Peter Alegi and Chris Bolsman, *South Africa and the Global Game. Football, Apartheid and Beyond*. (London: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Paul Darby, ‘Stanley Rous’s “own goal” football politics, South Africa and the Contest for the FIFA presidency in 1974,’ *Soccer and Society* 9. 2 (2008): 259-272; and Douglas Booth, ‘The South African council on sport and the political antinomies of the sports boycott,’ *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 23.1(1997): 51- 66.



This study on inter-racial soccer in the second half of the 1940s and the 1950s contributes to our knowledge of African-Indian relations in Natal. It is undertaken in the context of broader issues relating to apartheid sport, and race, class and gender in sport. The study is set during a period of increasing political protest against apartheid. As Alegi points out, ‘soccer can rightfully claim to have had a major hand in the social liberation of South Africa’s people’.<sup>14</sup> The history of protest in Natal is different from the national narrative due to African-Indian tensions and confrontation during this period.

There is a much richer literature on African-Indian relations in Natal, much of which focuses on the 1949 riots.<sup>15</sup> However, none of these studies touch on the tournament. Soske’s recent thesis on Africans and Indians in Natal devotes almost a whole chapter to non-racialism in the 1950s. It notes that a new generation of younger, urban Africans and Indians attended events like boxing matches, soccer games, and jazz concerts together and read about the new, decidedly multi-racial Africa in the pages of magazines like *Drum*. “Indians” became part of the urban panorama of a modernist Africa. This crafted a new political mood.’<sup>16</sup> However, the thesis has just one paragraph on soccer.

Most studies on the 1950s focus almost exclusively on politics. This study on the Inter-Race Soccer Tournament will therefore offer new knowledge and complement Soske’s outstanding study. It will also provide an opportunity to test his ideas, in particular whether agitation for political change influenced ordinary Indians and Africans in Natal. Understanding racial tensions is important because race continues to define many South Africans’ identity in the post-apartheid period. What lessons can we draw from these earlier experiments?

This study also adds to our knowledge of soccer in the region. Alegi observes that in the first decade of apartheid, the 1950s, ‘football was a shared cultural medium through which people involved in formal and informal social groups connected across racial, economic, ethnolinguistic and political lines.’<sup>17</sup>

### **Focus of this dissertation**

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<sup>14</sup> Alegi. *Laduma!*, x.

<sup>15</sup> See Edwards and Nuttall; Desai and Vahed, chapter 10; Soske, chapter 3. Many other studies deal with these riots.

<sup>16</sup> Soske. ‘Wash Me Black Again’, 198.

<sup>17</sup> Alegi. *Laduma!*, 37.

As noted earlier, I am passionate about soccer. The 2010 World Cup alerted me to the importance of looking beyond the soccer field and examining the politics behind the game. Sports history is a growing field of study globally; for my History Honours thesis I combined my love of soccer and history by examining a local soccer team, D'Albertyon Callies.<sup>18</sup> The study explored race, community and identities in Durban through the story of a soccer club formed in the early 1960s.

At the same time, my 2012 Honours course on the Comparative History of Race and Racism inspired me to reflect more seriously on the role of race in society generally and in sport in particular. This is a pertinent issue in the context of ongoing demands for the racial transformation of South African teams. Race remains an important concern in sport, as the many racial incidents during football matches across Europe, including “monkey chants” and other racial abuse directed at black players such as Italian Mario Balotelli illustrate. As this chapter was nearing completion in October 2013, Yaya Toure of the Ivory Coast, who plays for English team Manchester City, was subjected to racial chants by supporters of CSKA Moscow in a match in Russia. Europe’s governing body, UEFA opened disciplinary proceedings against CSKA Moscow ‘for the racist behaviour of their fans and for setting off fireworks’. Toure, in turn, warned that black players could boycott the 2018 World Cup in Russia.<sup>19</sup>

This thesis is concerned with several related issues. The first is the relationship between Indians, Africans, and Coloureds. This focuses on the initial contact between Indians and Africans in the nineteenth century and how this relationship developed; how Indians and Africans came to settle in the city; levels of tensions and cooperation; the role of the state in this process; and whether tension was inevitable. Did Africans and Indians compete simply because they were “Indian” and “African” or were other factors at the heart of this conflict? If so, what were these factors? What factors led to relations being racialised?

The second focus is the development of soccer in Natal, drawing, where relevant, on the evolving broad literature on sport and leisure in the region which allows for wider

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<sup>18</sup> The thesis, completed at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2012, is entitled “Race, Community, and Identity: A History of Sporting Club D’Albertyon Callies, 1962-1996.”

<sup>19</sup> John Edwards, “Black players could boycott 2018 Russia World Cup, warns City midfielder Toure after more racist abuse in Moscow,” *Daily Mail*, 24 October, 2013, accessed 25 October 2013. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-2475924/Yaya-Toure-racism--black-players-boycott-2018-Russia-World-Cup.html>.

comparison between Indians and Africans and, in particular, on the inter-race tournament. I will examine how the game of soccer was established on an organized basis; why Africans, Indians and Coloureds played in separate leagues; who the organisers of the early leagues were; the role of class and elitism in organising soccer; how soccer was gendered and whether this affected the development of a hegemonic masculinity; the role of the local state in the holding of these tournaments and its more general role in controlling the leisure time of Africans; and the venues where the games were held.

The third aspect of my inquiry involves the tournament itself. The thesis will examine why the NISB was formed and whether this was related to the political developments of the time; the class background of the organisers; where the games were played and how popular they were; whether fan support was race-based; whether or not the matches were an all-male affair in terms of spectators and organisers; the spirit with which the games were played; what the games did for “race relations” and why the tournament was eventually abandoned.

A final aspect that cannot be escaped is the politics of the 1950s. While attempts were made at both provincial and national levels to form a non-racial resistance movement, severe tensions surrounded cross-race collaboration in Natal. How did this play itself out in the context of the soccer tournament?

### **Theoretical framework**

The focus of this study is the history of the Natal Inter-race Soccer Tournament, with the political situation and relationship between Africans and Indians during this period forming a backdrop to the study. Race, class, and gender are important in this history. The thesis interrogates broad questions such as: did the inter-race games, which were intended to address racial tension, reinforce the idea of race? How do people understand race? When, why and how did the concept of race blossom historically?

Most people take it for granted that race refers to physical appearance that we use to categorise people. However, the matter is not as simple as it might seem. Is there anyone who is actually white? These people were once called “Europeans”. The term “Black” only came into vogue in South Africa in the late 1970s. “Indian” and “Asian” are used interchangeably. In apartheid South Africa, African Muslims from Zanzibar were called “Other Asiatics” because of their religion. A “mixed-race” person in the United States would be Coloured in

South Africa, *mulatto* in the Caribbean, and *negra* in Brazil.<sup>20</sup> While this nomenclature is important in understanding the fluidity of race, it is outside the scope of this study.

According to Steve Garner, rather than assume that “races” exist and try to explain race relations, we should look at how groups of people become identified as “races” and the process that this entails so that “race” becomes salient in “relations” (2010: 3).<sup>21</sup> Race is in itself not based on colour but has a long and varied history. Williams traces the roots of what we refer to as “race” to the rise of Europe and the discovery of the Americas by Europeans where the latter are said to have “discovered” new and strange peoples and used them as slaves on their plantations.<sup>22</sup> The debate on whether slavery caused racism or racism was the result of slavery is ongoing.<sup>23</sup> My view is that racism and slavery fed off each other and reinforced the idea of race. According to Williams, a further defining factor for the “invention” of race was the concept of scientific racism which developed during the European Enlightenment and gradually made ‘a causal link between race and genetics with characteristics such as criminal behaviour, work ethic and intelligence, thereby justifying economic and social inequity.’<sup>24</sup>

Anti-racist scholars have argued that races do not exist. Mitchell asserts that the human race is the only race and any other notion of race is a myth.<sup>25</sup> Beasley argues that the biological differences between “races” are far smaller than differences within each “race” in terms of morphology, intelligence, and genome.<sup>26</sup> While race is not a biological fact it affects people everyday lives and is one way to create divisions between “them” and “us”. As Omi and Winant state, race is ‘a matter of both social structure and cultural representation.’ We attribute racial difference and hierarchy to people on the basis of their behaviour - like slaughtering cows or polygamy - as well as social structure; like labour market segmentation

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<sup>20</sup> Steve Garner, *Racisms. An Introduction*. (London: Sage, 2010), 4.

<sup>21</sup> Garner, *Racisms. An Introduction*, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Dianne Williams, *Race, Ethnicity and Crime: Alternative Perspectives*. (United States: Algora Publishing, 2012), 6.

<sup>23</sup> See Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: 1492-1800. From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800*. Second Edition. Verso World History Series, 2010.

<sup>24</sup> Williams, ‘*Race, Ethnicity and Crime*’, 7.

<sup>25</sup> Mitchell, Johnnie P. *The Jig Is Up: We Are One: Race Is a Hoax That Fails American Education*. (Bloomington: iUniverse, 2010), 23.

<sup>26</sup> See Edward Beasley, *The Victorian Reinvention of Race: New Racisms and the Problem of Grouping in the Human Sciences*. (United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis; Routledge, 2010).

which marginalises certain people. Political discourse and the way the news is reported also reinforce negative stereotypes.<sup>27</sup>

For the purposes of this study, the key point is that while there is no agreement on the exact definition of “race” and while we agree that race is not a biological category and should not be essentialised; race is a social category that has meaning and significance in given contexts. Thus, Garner concludes that, the ‘object of study should not be “race” itself, but the process by which it becomes meaningful in a particular context.’<sup>28</sup> The role of the local and national state in South Africa was crucial in this process of racialisation. Anthony Marx, Edwards and Nuttall, Bill Freund, Shula Marks, and Saul Dubow<sup>29</sup> shed light on how and why race was used by the state in its policy making and what other factors shaped relations in Natal from the late nineteenth century. This is discussed in greater detail in chapter two.

Internationally, there is a large body of literature on race and sport which this study will draw on. For example, Harry Edwards, Hawkins (2010), and Hoberman (1997),<sup>30</sup> amongst others have shed light on the cultural complexities of race in sport in the United States. However, the current study is not concerned specifically with how race impacts sporting contexts (such as the selection of teams or opportunities for players) but how matches between racially segregated groups impacted race dynamics in Natal. As such, this valuable literature is not drawn on extensively.

Race is not an independent variable in identity formation and class and gender cannot be separated from race. According to Anthias and Yuval-Davis, ‘race, class and gender are not independent variables that can be tacked onto each other or separated at will ... they are

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<sup>27</sup> Michael Omi and Winant Howard. *Racial Formation in the United States*. (New York: Routledge, 1994), 56.

<sup>28</sup> Garner, *Racisms. An Introduction*, 18.

<sup>29</sup> See Anthony W. Marx, *Making Race and Nation. A Comparison of the United States, South Africa, and Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); I. Edwards and T. Nuttall, “Seizing the Moment: The January 1949 Riots, Proletarian Populism and the Structures of African Urban Life in Durban during the late 1940s,” Unpublished paper, History Workshop, Wits University, February 1990; Bill Freund, *Insiders and Outsiders: The Indian Working Class of Durban, 1910-1990*, (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1995); Shula Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism, and the State in Twentieth-Century Natal*. (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) and Saul Dubow, *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

<sup>30</sup> See Fritz G. Polite and Billy Hawkins (eds.), *Sport, Race, Activism, and Social Change: The Impact of Dr. Harry Edwards' Scholarship and Service* (Georgia: Cognella Press, 2011); Billy Hawkins, *The New Plantation: Black Athletes, College Sports, and Predominantly White NCAA Institutions* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010); and John M. Hoberman, *Darwin's Athletes: How Sport Has Damaged Black America and Preserved the Myth of Race* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).

concrete social relations enmeshed in each other.<sup>31</sup> Like race, class and gender are ‘hierarchical systems of global power relations with national, regional and more local configurations.’<sup>32</sup> Gender determines the composition of the workforce and its reproduction. In *Masculinities*, Connell shows that physical experiences are important to people. Sport is one way in which men demonstrate their masculinity and it therefore largely excluded women. Like work, education, and other areas of life, sport was a means for men to demonstrate their ‘hegemonic masculinity’ and subjugate women.<sup>33</sup> Despite various interventions, a hegemonic masculinity continues to prevail in sport which is not ‘a vehicle for the articulation of an inherited manliness. Rather, a sphere such as sport provides a regular and routinised forum for the promotion and expression of learned and generated masculinity.’<sup>34</sup>

Class as a system produced by the capitalist economy determines social relations and played an important role in the development of sport in colonial settings as it was mainly African, Indian and Coloured educated, political and business elites who organised these soccer matches. Leo Kuper (1965) and Ben Magubane’s (1963) studies are pertinent to the development of these elites in Natal and are explored further in chapter two.<sup>35</sup> Class continues to shape sports participation globally, including South Africa where the majority of players representing the country in rugby and cricket, for example are from elite private schools. Internationally, class habitus and cultural capital determines participation in such sports as golf, tennis, and swimming.<sup>36</sup>

Finally, in light of the struggle against colonialism, segregation, and apartheid, for far too long, the history of South Africa has been dominated by political history; the histories of wars and of “great men”. As a passionate historian, I believe that we should record the histories of those who were neglected in the past, such as our mothers who played such a crucial role in keeping our societies functioning while our fathers worked on the mines; the children who

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<sup>31</sup> F. Anthias and N. Yuval-Davis, *Racialised Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the Anti-racist struggle*. (London: Routledge, 1992), 63.

<sup>32</sup> Garner, *Racisms*, 32.

<sup>33</sup> R.W. Connell. *Masculinities*. Second Edition. (California: University of California Press, 2005). See Chapter titled, ‘Men's Bodies.’

<sup>34</sup> John Horne, Alan Tomlinson, Garry Whannel and Kath Woodward, *Understanding SPORT. A Socio-Cultural Analysis*. Second Edition. (London: Routledge, 2013), 60.

<sup>35</sup> See Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie*, and Ben Magubane, “Sports and politics in an urban African community: a case study of African voluntary organizations,” (Master of Social Science, University of Natal, 1963).

<sup>36</sup> Horne, Tomlinson, Whannel and Woodward. *Understanding SPORT*, 52-55.

endured hardship because of the breakdown of families; the musicians and the artists who entertained us; the schoolteachers who did so much to keep a culture of learning alive in our schools; and the sportsmen (and now women) who brought so much joy (and much pain to non-Kaizer Chiefs supporters!) to so many thousands. This study is a very small and modest contribution to filling these silences in our history.<sup>37</sup>

### ***Structure of the thesis***

In addition to this introduction, the thesis comprises of five chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter two provides a background and context for the study. It briefly discusses the arrival of Indians in Natal and their urbanisation in the 1930s and 1940s, which brought them into greater contact, as well as conflict over limited resources, with Africans. The chapter also examines the development of Indian and African soccer in Natal up to the 1940s, as well the various national race-based soccer tournaments that were organised. It underscores that sport and life in general was organised along racially separate lines; this only changed from the 1940s, hence the significance of the NISB.

Chapter three examines the formation of the NISB in 1946 and the first five years of its existence. The NISB was formed in the aftermath of the Second World War and in the context of a rapidly expanding urban African population. These years were also witness to heightened labour unrest, the 1946-48 Indian passive resistance campaign against land segregation, the coming to power of the National Party (NP) in 1948, and the 1949 Durban racial riots involving Indians and Africans. Some of these events impacted the NISB while in other ways it reflected broader trends.

Chapter four shows that the federal soccer structure was well and truly ensconced by 1952. Soccer enjoyed wide popularity among urban Africans. This was the period when apartheid legislation sought to define and segregate people according to race through such legislation as the Group Areas Act which was designed to segregate residential areas; the Population Registration Act of 1950 which classified people according to race; and the Bantu Authorities

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<sup>37</sup> See Vinayak Chaturvedi, ed., *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* (Mappings Series), (London, Verso, 2012). Particularly relevant is Ranajit Guha, 'On Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India'. *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*. Ed. Vinayak Chaturvedi. (London: Verso), 1-7, on the politics of subalternity and representation.

Act (1951), Natives Laws Amendment Act (1952), and Natives (Abolition of Passes) Act (1952) to keep Africans out of urban areas. The Suppression of Communism Act (1950) gave the NP government widespread powers to suppress opposition to apartheid. Political leaders were also striving for cross-racial collaboration and mass mobilisation. It is in the context of this charged political atmosphere and attempts to move away from race-based resistance that developments in soccer are viewed. The inter-race tournament reflected attempts to forge contact, albeit ephemeral, on the sports field. Indians dominated the tournament until 1955, when the tide shifted in favour of Africans.

Chapter five shows that the period from the mid-1950s witnessed a shift in soccer power in Natal, with Africans gaining ascendancy on the field. This did not come about by chance, but was a result of more professional organisation on the part of African administrators, and superior preparation as a result of the appointment of a coach who had played soccer in the English first division. The move towards local non-racial soccer ran parallel to changes at national level which thrust soccer into the international spotlight. While the Treason Trial captured national headlines, soccer was at the forefront of challenging white hegemony.

Chapter six, the conclusion, summarises the main arguments of this thesis and reflects on the short and long term significance of the NISB inter-racial tournament.



## Chapter Two

### Africans, Indians and soccer in the city, 1890s – 1940s

This chapter briefly traces the arrival of Indians in colonial Natal, the subjugation of Africans in the colonial period, the urbanisation of Indians and Africans in the early decades of the twentieth century, and Afro-Indian relations in the mid-twentieth century. It serves as a background and context for the key focus of this thesis, namely, the development of soccer amongst Blacks in the province of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal). While Indians arrived as indentured workers from various parts of India, as Freund observes, they became “Indian” in South Africa as they coalesced in a ‘process, still very shadowily understood, into an ethnic group identified’ as “Indian” regardless of any internal differences.’<sup>38</sup> Mohandas K. Gandhi, who would later become a prominent Indian nationalist leader and a global figure, ‘challenged the afflictions facing the diverse groups of Indians’ and called on them to unite as he saw ‘Indian struggles in South Africa as linked to “Motherland”’.<sup>39</sup>

This formation of Indian identity, on the one hand, and the differential incorporation of Indians and Africans into the colonial economy, triggered tensions and antagonism between Indians and Africans. As Kirk observes, ‘contact between Indians and Africans became increasingly superficial and ethnically structured.’ Africans believed that they were sitting in the auditorium watching Indians gain more ‘privileges while gradually reinforcing exclusivist tendencies.’<sup>40</sup>

Given the fact that Africans and Indians, by and large, developed along different trajectories it is not surprising that soccer developed along racially segregated lines. Furthermore, it is evident that sport was dominated by elites.

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<sup>38</sup> Freund, *Insiders and outsiders*, 10.

<sup>39</sup> Ashwin Desai and Goolam Vahed. “Indenture and Indianness in South Africa, 1860 - 1913,” in Sujata Patel and Tina Uys, eds, *Contemporary India and South Africa. Legacies, Identities and Dilemmas*. New Delhi: Routledge, 2012. pp. 21 – 34. 23.

<sup>40</sup> S.L Kirk, “The 1949 Durban Riots: A Community in Conflict,” (Masters diss. [history], University of Natal, 1983), 44 – 45.

## **Africans and Indians in Colonial Natal, 1860-1910**

Bridglal Pachai observes that, in the nineteenth century, Natal had ‘great mineral and agricultural possibilities.’<sup>41</sup> While there was coal in the northern districts, and crops such as arrow root, indigo and cotton, sugar cane offered the greatest agricultural possibilities on the coast. It ‘led the way’ when, in 1850, Edward Morewood planted the first cane north of Durban. Sugar cane ‘accounted for the bulk of the total gross value of arable farming’ and was identified as the most ‘profitable commercial crop suited’ for the climate of Natal.<sup>42</sup> The greatest perceived problem facing the industry was the shortage of labour; in reality, as Maharaj points out, the problem facing settlers was ‘not the shortage of labour, but rather a lack of a plentiful supply of cheap labour.’<sup>43</sup>

Why did settlers not utilise the hundred thousand strong African, mainly Zulu population in Natal at the time? Palmer explains that Africans ‘were still in a stage of subsistence economy’ and did not need to engage in ‘a contract of labour.’<sup>44</sup> The Zulu were reluctant ‘to be subjected to the disciplines of regular attendance at work.’<sup>45</sup> They were also ‘not accustomed to the discipline of wage labour or amenable to the routine of contract employment.’<sup>46</sup> Settlers considered African labour “risky” because of their ‘unauthorised absence’ from work when their own plots required attention, a period that coincided with the time when they were most needed on the settlers’ farms.<sup>47</sup> From the settler perspective, the indigenous Zulus could not be relied upon for commercial farming as they were considered ‘unreliable’, had ‘access to land and were unwilling to enter into a subsistent labour relationship.’<sup>48</sup>

Jeff Guy has shown that Africans did not enter the labour market because they ‘were a productive people.... African society and its productive resources were just too strong to be

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<sup>41</sup> Bridglal Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question, 1860 – 1971*. (Cape Town: C. Struik (Pty) Ltd, 1971), 2 – 3.

<sup>42</sup> Desai and Vahed, *Indenture and Indianness*, 22.

<sup>43</sup> Maharaj, Brij. Ethnicity, Class, State and Conflict: The ‘Indian Question’ in Natal South Africa, in Laxmi Narayan Kadekar, Ajaya Kumar Sahoo and Gauri Bhattacharya, eds, *The Indian Diaspora: Historical and Contemporary Context*. Jaipur (New Delhi): Rawat Publications, 2009, 81.

<sup>44</sup> Mabel Palmer. *The History of the Indians in Natal* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), 10.

<sup>45</sup> Pachai, *The International Aspects*, 3.

<sup>46</sup> H.R. Burrows. *Indian Life and Labour in Natal*, (Durban: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1952), 1.

<sup>47</sup> Pachai, *The International Aspects*, 3.

<sup>48</sup> Desai and Vahed, *Indenture and Indianness*, 23.

either outpaced or undermined'.<sup>49</sup> Guy adds that behind the emerging racial order was the settlers':

failure to gain possession of the three factors of production in the system that made them: land, labour and capital...people were there: able bodied Africans, men and women, hundreds and thousands of them, but labour was not. Despite all the attempts that were made to get them out to work, they retained their own priorities, their own timetable by which they organised the productive year and identified their needs. They were not yet the amenable, disciplined and cheap labour resource that the settlers believed they must have if they were to be successful and to which they were entitled. And out of this visible native autonomy and its concomitant settler dependence and vulnerability grew a pathological racial hostility (2013: 341-2).<sup>50</sup>

Burrows estimates that before Indians arrived in Natal the total White population in Natal was less than 7 000.<sup>51</sup> This "shortage" of labour hampered the growth of the sugar industry; hence the necessity for "reliable", alternative labour. The growth of sugar plantations thus provided the 'first insistent demand for a constant supply of workers.'<sup>52</sup> Settlers turned to India to ease the labour problem and the first group of migrants arrived in 1860. Indian labour proved important to the economy of Natal as Indian workers 'could be exploited with long working hours, and low wages which were further reduced through massive penalties for petty offences.'<sup>53</sup> Between 1860 and 1911, a total of 152 641 Indians arrived in Natal. Indentured Indians were followed by "passenger" Indians who came from Gujarat on the west coast of India from the mid-1870s.<sup>54</sup> By the early twentieth century, a third social group had emerged amongst Indians in Natal; an educated elite of lawyers, teachers, civil servants and accountants produced by mission schools.<sup>55</sup>

Colonialism was brutal to the Zulu: migrant labour forced them from their homesteads to work deep underground on the mines of South Africa, where a single-sex closed compound

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<sup>49</sup> Jeff Guy, *Theophilus Shepstone and The Forging of Natal* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2013), 341.

<sup>50</sup> Guy, *Theophilus Shepstone*, 342.

<sup>51</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 1.

<sup>52</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 1.

<sup>53</sup> Maharaj, *Ethnicity, Class, State and Conflict*, 81.

<sup>54</sup> S. Bhana and J. Brain, *Setting Down Roots. Indian Migrants in South Africa, 1860-1911* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1990), 23.

<sup>55</sup> See Goolam Vahed, "Natal's Indians, the Empire and the South African War, 1899 – 1902," *New Contre* (1999): 185-216, 185; and M. Swan, *Gandhi. The South African Experience* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985), 185.

system controlled all aspects of their lives in order to create a disciplined work force, and large numbers died from lung diseases.<sup>56</sup> Taxes crippled African economic activity and curfews and pass laws curtailed their movement and destroyed independent economic activity.<sup>57</sup> As van Onselen shows, as South Africa's industrial revolution gained momentum, pass laws were used to 'restrict the mobility of black workers and ... confine large numbers of them to the industrial barracks at the very heart of the new order, the mine compounds of the Witwatersrand.' These laws bound workers to employers at low wages and allowed for deserters to be imprisoned.<sup>58</sup>

Africans were prevented from settling in urban areas. Duminy and Guest note that from 1899 to 1910, Durban's Indian population grew from 9562 to 16131 while the African population increased from 11935 to 16489, having peaked at 19600 in 1905-6.<sup>59</sup> They add that, 'an increasing number [of Africans] were experiencing urban life for varying periods of employment, primarily as domestic servants and "togt" daily labourers' but were prevented from settling in Durban by the Native Servants Act. Africans 'could not move an inch without a pass... Between 8 000 and 20 000 African workers were arrested each year for misdemeanours.'<sup>60</sup>

Despite this oppressive legislation, white settler society lived in constant fear of the "native". This lent new urgency to the destruction of the Zulu Kingdom and the extension of British rule northwards along the south-east coast of Africa. Guy describes the aftermath of the Bambatha Rebellion:

The execution of those who it was said had murdered whites, the exile of chiefs said to be disloyal, over three thousand dead and three thousand in gaol, the refusal to consider an amnesty for those in hiding, the cattle seized, property looted and homesteads burnt were still, incredibly, not enough... Officials were planning further punishment and

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<sup>56</sup> See R. Turrell, "Kimberley's Model Compounds," *The Journal of African History* 25.1 (1984): 59-75.

<sup>57</sup> See Colin Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the African Peasantry*. (Cape Town: David Philip, 1979).

<sup>58</sup> C. Van Onselen, "Crime and Total Institutions in the making of Modern South Africa," *History Workshop: a journal of socialist and feminist historians*, 19, (1985): 62-81, 63.

<sup>59</sup> A. Duminy, and B. Guest, Conclusion in *Natal and Zululand from earliest times to 1910: A new history*. (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1989), 428 - 437, 431.

<sup>60</sup> Duminy and B Guest, Conclusion in *Natal and Zululand from earliest times to 1910: A new history*. (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1989), 428-437, 432.

suppression... The colonial dream of conquest, the creation of an African population both subservient to and appreciative of alien rule was never-could never-be attained.<sup>61</sup>

Land grabbing by both Boer and Brit devastated the Zulu economy. In 1905, a new one pound tax was levied on all unmarried males over the age of 18. This followed a tax on dogs, a tax to marry, and a tax on huts. By then, the migrant labour system was feeding cheap African bodies to the mines in their droves. In Shula Marks' words, this kept African workers 'on the treadmill for as long as possible... through a network of laws.'<sup>62</sup> The reserves were expected to provide for the subsistence needs of women, children, the lame and the old. They subsidised wages, keeping African labour cheap. This was a system of super-exploitation built on a racist and repressive labour regime. The Bambatha Rebellion was a direct response to the new tax, but underlying it was the unyielding stranglehold of white power that looted land and cattle and dealt with the Zulus through casual brutality.

The Rebellion was cruelly suppressed. Bambatha's head was cut off and displayed at military headquarters. As Marks wrote, the results were devastating:

Almost four thousand Africans were killed and tens of thousands rendered homeless; white casualties were trifling. In the aftermath of the rebellion, the pace of proletarianisation quickened as destitute people, driven from the land, were forced to seek employment on white farms, mines and industries.<sup>63</sup>

Indians were also subjected to a plethora of racist legislation. Most chose to remain in Natal after completing their indenture and did well as hawkers and market gardeners. This economic "success", coupled with the threat that Indian traders posed to white traders led to anti-Indian legislation after Natal achieved Responsible Government in 1893. The Indian Immigration Law of 1895 stipulated that all non-indentured Indian males over 16 and females over 13 had to pay an annual tax of £3; Act 8 of 1896 effectively denied Indians the franchise; the Immigration Restriction Act of 1897 gave the state power to restrict Indian entry into Natal; and the Dealers Licenses Act gave town councils the power to deny business licenses on the grounds of sanitation or if the applicant was unable to keep account books in English.

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<sup>61</sup> J. Guy, *The Maphumulo Uprising: War, Law and Ritual in the Zulu Rebellion*. (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2005), 204.

<sup>62</sup> Shula Marks, "War and Union, 1899-1910", in R. Ross, A. Mager and B. Nasson, Eds, *The Cambridge History of South Africa, Volume 2: 1855-1994*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 157-210, 166.

<sup>63</sup> Marks, *War and Union*, 202.

The Natal government used the tax to force Indians to return to India, and the other laws to keep Indians out of Natal, deny them trade licences, and deny them the vote.<sup>64</sup>

Indian protest against racist legislation, coordinated by Mohandas K. Gandhi and the NIC, culminated in the strike of 1913. This was a pivotal moment in the history of Indians in South Africa. From the coalmines of Northern Natal to the coastal sugar plantations, the Indian working class took on the ruling class, often in hand-to-hand combat. The indentured had a history of resistance that pre-dated Gandhi. Gandhi wrote to Gokhale in 1913 that he was ‘astonished at the unlooked for ability shown by indentured Indians without effective leadership to act with determination and discipline’ and that they had shown ‘unexpected powers of endurance and suffering.’<sup>65</sup> The strike ended with an agreement between Gandhi and General Smuts, following which Gandhi returned to India in July 1914. Many Indian grievances were unresolved: they still did not have the vote, could not move to other provinces, faced licencing restrictions, and further Indian immigration was prohibited.<sup>66</sup>

### **African and Indian Urbanisation**

Burrows notes, that, there was a dramatic increase in Durban’s urban population between 1921 and 1946:

The number of Indian urban population increased sevenfold, the number of Africans nearly fourfold, and the Indian rural population in Natal changed from being nearly four times the population to being one half. In the case of Natal Municipalities (excluding Zululand) between 1921 and 1946 the number of Indians under their jurisdiction rose from 30 000 to 152 000.<sup>67</sup>

The Indian government prohibited further emigration of indentured labourers to Natal in 1911. According to the official South African census, there were 133 417 Indians in Natal in 1911; 141 649 by 1921; 183 661 by 1936; and 232 217 by 1946.<sup>68</sup> This was despite the government offering Indians financial inducements to return to India. After 1911, ‘free Indians’, that is, Indians who were free from indentured labour, emerged in urban areas. The

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<sup>64</sup> See Surendra Bhana and Goolam Vahed. *The Making of a Social Reformer. Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa, 1893-1914*. (Delhi: Manohar Books, 2005), 35-38.

<sup>65</sup> J. Lelyveld, *Great Soul: Mahatma Gandhi and His Struggle with India* (New York: A. Knopf, 2011), 126.

<sup>66</sup> See Maureen Swan, *Gandhi. The South African Experience* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985) for a critical review of Gandhi in South Africa.

<sup>67</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life*, 1952, 52.

<sup>68</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 3.

employment of Indians in the sugar industry decreased as white farmers ‘swung-over to African labour’ and this contributed to Indian migration to urban areas.<sup>69</sup> Indian employment on the sugar estates fell from 3 739 in 1911 to 488 in 1945.<sup>70</sup> The same was true for the railways where the number of Indians employed fell from around 6 000 in 1910 to just 400 by 1936.<sup>71</sup> There were hardly any Indians left on the coal mines.

Burrows observe that the increase in the Indian population in towns was not a ‘natural increase’ but a ‘result of drift to the towns’.<sup>72</sup> It was ‘due less to the attractions and amenities offered to’ them in the city than to the ‘spur of economic necessity.’<sup>73</sup> The period from the 1910 to the 1940s saw Indians take up market gardening in areas such as Springfield and Riverside, while others joined factories as Durban became more industrialised or found clerical work in the municipality or emerging law firms or manual jobs with the municipality.<sup>74</sup> The African population in Durban also increased dramatically in the first half of the twentieth-century, from 18 929 in 1904 to 64 023 in 1936; However, there were still fewer Africans than whites and Indians, who numbered 86 684 and 79 217, respectively. There were only 7 040 Coloureds.<sup>75</sup>

**TABLE 1** Racial Composition of Durban's Population

YEAR	Whites	Coloureds	Indians	Africans	Total
1904	31 302	1 980	15 631	18 929	67 842
1911	31 903	2 497	17 015	17 750	69 165
1921	46 113	4 000	16 400	29 011	93 515
1931	59 250	4 240	17 860	43 750	125 100
1936	88 065	7 336	80 384	63 762	239 547
1949	129 683	11 280	123 165	109 543	373 771

**Source:** University of Natal, *The Durban Housing Survey*. Durban: University of Natal, 1952,35.

<sup>69</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 52.

<sup>70</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*. 161.

<sup>71</sup> R.H. Smith, *Labour Resources of Natal* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1950), 76.

<sup>72</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 52.

<sup>73</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 52.

<sup>74</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 8.

<sup>75</sup> University of Natal, *The Durban Housing Survey. A Study of Housing in a Multi-racial Community*. (Durban: University of Natal Press, 1952), 35; and Report of City Valuator and Estates Manager, 29 November 1939. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1608, 352.

Africans were mainly male and migrant, with a male to female ratio of 3.6 to 1 in 1936.<sup>76</sup> Most lived in single-sex hostels or informal shack settlements which the local population opposed as they were associated with prostitution and beer brewing.<sup>77</sup> Around a third of the Africans in Durban were regarded as being settled in the city; the rest were considered migrants<sup>78</sup> and worked in poorly paid jobs as togt (casual) labourers, ricksha-pullers, domestic workers, and washermen.<sup>79</sup>

The transient labour system made it difficult for the local state to control Africans in the city. According to the 1936 census, there were 4781 African traders who sold such things as mealies, meat, “snuff”, wood, and fruit.<sup>80</sup> The most prominent merchant and political figure of the 1920s and 1930s was arguably A.W.G. Champion.

In order to provide social services to Africans, the local state developed what came to be known as the “Durban system”, in which barracks and locations were built to house and control Africans, and beerhalls to fund the system.<sup>81</sup> The Native Beer Act of 1908 gave the municipality a beer monopoly as Durban’s Native Revenue Account funded itself.<sup>82</sup> A Native Affairs Department was created in 1916 to register and control workers. One of its first steps was to impose a nightly curfew on Africans.<sup>83</sup>

African anger at these controls simmered for the much of the 1920s and boiled over into militancy by the end of the decade. Hemson notes that one of the key figures in mobilising Africans was A.W.G. Champion who led the protests through the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU).<sup>84</sup> These culminated in the 1929 beerhall boycott and pass-burning on

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<sup>76</sup> Tim Nuttall, "Leaves in the Trees", in P Maylam and I Edwards. eds. *The People's City. African Life in Twentieth-Century Durban*. (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1996),174-201, 175 and 196.

<sup>77</sup> Frederick Cooper, ed., *The Struggle for the City: Migrant Labor, Capital and the State in Africa*. (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983), 36.

<sup>78</sup> Nuttall, "Leaves in the Trees", 175.

<sup>79</sup> P. Maylam. "Introduction", in P. Maylam and I. Edwards. eds. *The People's City. African Life in Twentieth-Century Durban*. (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1996), 1-32, 3.

<sup>80</sup> Maylam, "Introduction", 7.

<sup>81</sup> Evidence by Durban Town Council to Native Economic Commission, 26/03/1931.3/DBN, 4/1/2/1220, 29/467.

<sup>82</sup> P. la Hause, “The Struggle for the City: Alcohol, the Ematsheni and Popular Culture in Durban, 1902-1936,” in Maylam and Edwards, eds, *The People's City*, 33-66, 35.

<sup>83</sup> P. Maylam, "Introduction," 6.

<sup>84</sup> David Hemson, “In the Eye of the Storm: Dockworkers in Durban,” in Paul Maylam and Iain Edwards, eds, *The People's City: African Life in Twentieth-Century Durban* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1996), 152.



“Dingane's Day” in 1930.<sup>85</sup> The 18-month long boycott of the state’s beer monopoly started in June 1929 and mass meetings drew crowds upwards of 6 000. However, at the heart of the dispute was low wages, which led to great economic hardship, and control over movement.<sup>86</sup>

The boycott and protests led to the appointment of the de Waal Commission, which recommended that measures be taken to improve African social conditions in Durban and that recreation and welfare services be improved. It also suggested the appointment of a Native Advisory Board (NAB) to enable the local state to liaise with more moderate Africans.<sup>87</sup> Other measures taken to bolster the position of the state were increasing police strength, prohibiting Africans from brewing beer and banishing Champion from Durban for three years.

The NAB comprised of ten nominated African members and four white councillors. The Africans were usually from the educated and trader classes. They were seconded from different African organisations in order get buy-in from locals. The first board included members of the Natal Native Congress, the ICU, the barracks at Bell Street, Railways Compound, Municipal Hostel, Married Natives Quarters, Dalton and Depot Road.<sup>88</sup> Many Africans expressed their willingness to participate. The ICU, for example, wanted to forget the ‘misunderstanding of the last five years.... A spirit of co-operation ... should be the guiding star of all who will be called upon to administer the Native Administration.’<sup>89</sup>

Following the riots, the state was pressured by white liberals and business to increase and control Africans’ leisure time. The Rotary Club, the Durban Chamber of Commerce, and the Natal Missionary Society, Esperanza, called for the appointment of a Native Welfare Officer.<sup>90</sup> The Town Council advertised this position in March 1930 and after extensive interviews appointed J.T. Rawlins, who had lived in the Transkei, Natal and Zululand, was fluent in Zulu, Xhosa, English and Afrikaans and had served as the Native Location

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<sup>85</sup> Maylam, “Introduction,” 11.

<sup>86</sup> L. Torr, *The Durban City Council and Urban Land Use, 1923-1933: the founding of Lamont*. Paper presented at the Workshop on African Urban Life in Durban in the Twentieth Century, 26-27 October 1983, University of Natal, Durban, 30.

<sup>87</sup> Extract from Minutes of Durban Town Council, 26 January 1930. 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1147.

<sup>88</sup> Minutes of Native Advisory Board, 22 January 1930. NA, 3/DBN, 1/2/12/1/1.

<sup>89</sup> A.W.G. Champion, General Secretary, ICU, to Town Clerk, Durban, 27 December 1929. 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1147, 29/323.

<sup>90</sup> NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1165, 352, 18 July 1929.

Superintendent at Brits in the Transvaal.<sup>91</sup> Rawlins viewed sport as a means of occupying Africans productively, ensuring discipline and keeping them away from “vices” such as beer drinking and prostitution. The Council took his suggestions seriously and shortly after his appointment Rawlins was sent on a reconnaissance visit to Johannesburg and other urban centres in January 1932 to establish what arrangements were in place for African recreation.<sup>92</sup> Rawlins introduced Africans to tennis, films, draughts, and social clubs, and reinforced old cultural forms such as ngoma dancing.<sup>93</sup>

### **Urban Africans and the forging of a soccer culture**

Soccer was an integral part of Indian and African’s lives in Natal. Alegi writes that soccer, brought to South Africa by European settlers, ‘came to be a mainstay of black sporting experience’ in urban areas.<sup>94</sup> On 23 August 1862, ‘soldiers and employees of the colonial administration played what is perhaps the earliest documented football match’ in Cape Town.<sup>95</sup> Alegi describes the growth of soccer in this early period:

The Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 and the subsequent war with the South African Republic (Transvaal) in 1880-81 brought a large influx of working-class British soldiers who popularised football. Whites in Natal founded the first stable, formal football organisations: the Pietermaritzburg County Football Club in 1879 and the Natal Football Association in 1882. In this formative period a wide range of Black men took up football; in 1886 there already were four Indian football clubs in Durban. African football’s origins in Natal can be traced back to the 1890s, with mission school students making up a significant portion of the membership of many clubs.<sup>96</sup>

The American Board missionary, Onslow Carleton, founded the “famous” Bush Bucks Football Club at Ifafa mission, south of Durban, in 1902.<sup>97</sup> Soccer’s popularity increased and as the numbers of Africans staying in the city grew, so did the demand for facilities. C.P. Layman, manager of the Native Affairs Department (NAD) wrote to the Town Clerk in 1929 that there was an ‘increasing demand for additional facilities for sport ... amongst the Natives

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<sup>91</sup> Correspondence in files of Town Clerk, A.O. Jones. NA, 3/DBN, 38/160/21b, vol. 1,4/1/2/662.

<sup>92</sup> Minutes of Native Advisory Board, 17 February 1932. NA, 3/DBN, 1/2/12/1/1.

<sup>93</sup> See Goolam Vahed, ‘The Control of African Leisure Time in Durban during the 1930s,’ *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, vol. 18 (1998): 67-123.

<sup>94</sup> Alegi, *Laduma!* 1

<sup>95</sup> Alegi, *Laduma!* 15.

<sup>96</sup> Peter Alegi, “The Football Heritage Complex: history, tourism, and development in South Africa,” *Africa Spectrum* 41, 3 (2006): 415-426, 419.

<sup>97</sup> Alegi, “The Football Heritage Complex,” 420.

of the Borough.<sup>98</sup> He added that soccer was the most popular sport amongst Africans. Twenty clubs were affiliated to the Durban and District Native Football Association, which had been formed in 1907 (formally constituted in 1916). The District Native Football Association (DDNFA) was ‘the first major urban African football organisation in the country.’<sup>99</sup> Douglas Evans, manager of the Somtseu Road Men's Hostel, was president of the DDNFA from 1916 to 1923 and remained an Elder of the Association and Honorary Life President thereafter.<sup>100</sup> The Natal African Football Association (NAFA) was formed in 1920. Pietermaritzburg did not initially join the association because it was opposed to Durban having a white president. After Evan’s resignation it joined.<sup>101</sup>

Although Evans was initially involved in soccer administration, the game was, by and large, administered by Africans. In the 1920s and 1930s educated Africans such as Charles and William Dube, who were the brothers of the first ANC President and founder of the *Ilanga* newspaper, John Dube, as well as Nkosi Albert Luthuli, played important roles in soccer.<sup>102</sup> In 1932, the DDNFA adopted English as its official language; ‘delegates wishing to address meetings in Zulu needed the chairman's permission.’<sup>103</sup> Language was one way of ensuring that the association was dominated by educated elites. These elites were often involved in religious, social, educational, and welfare bodies. One of the features of this period was that soccer officials embraced white officials’ procedures for rules and debates. Magubane suggested that this allowed the African elites to ‘identify mentally with the practices and outlook of the dominant white group ... as vicarious participation in the European social structure.’<sup>104</sup> Kuper contended that the ‘symbols of power represented by the committee procedures of the white man become a substitute for the exercise of power, and that political energy, denied other expression, is projected into the Football Association.’<sup>105</sup>

Nkosi Albert Luthuli, future president of the ANC and Nobel Peace Prize winner, was a key figure in soccer during the 1930s. He was elected to the vice-presidency of the DDNFA in

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<sup>98</sup> C.P. Layman, Manager, Native Affairs Department, to Town Clerk, 30 January 1929. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1165, 352.

<sup>99</sup> Alegi, “The Football Heritage Complex,” 420.

<sup>100</sup> Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie*, 348.

<sup>101</sup> Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie*, 348.

<sup>102</sup> John Nauright, *Sport, Cultures and identities in South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1997), 106.

<sup>103</sup> Alegi. ‘Sport, Race and Liberation Before Apartheid.’

<sup>104</sup> Magubane, *Sport and Politics*, 45.

<sup>105</sup> Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie*, 351.

1929 and served as secretary and treasurer of the SAAFA in 1932.<sup>106</sup> Sports administrators from Natal played an important role in ‘transforming sport into a potent force for racial integration, equality, and human rights.’<sup>107</sup> Luthuli saw soccer as a form of popular culture that cut across class, regional, and generational lines, and an activity that could assist to ‘build political alliances between Durban's mostly Zulu urban workers, rural migrants, and mission-educated elites.’<sup>108</sup> Class was central to the way in which sport and other recreational activities developed in Natal. According to Magubane:

The involvement of Luthuli, later president of the ANC, bears out the point that one cannot speak of a self-conscious working-class culture in Durban during this period because the elite played an important role in organising sport. The reality was that there was an alliance between teachers, political leaders, businesspeople, clerics, petty bourgeoisie and workers.... Leadership in the Association is highly valued and the affiliated clubs is highly prized, and for important matches sport administrators often lead their teams onto the field in proud parade. Rivalry for leadership is often resolved by fission; ... thus fifteen clubs had split off from the Wanderers Football Club.<sup>109</sup>

Alegi gives the example of Durban businessman Henry Posselt Gagu Ngwenya, a former official of Zulu Royals, to illustrate the power that officials could accrue. Ngwenya was born in Harrismith in 1899 to a Methodist preacher and school teacher father and educated at mission schools. After trying his hand at various trades he opened a restaurant in Durban for an African clientele. He joined the ANC in 1942 and was elected to the national executive in 1948. He resigned in 1950 and in 1952 was elected president of the DDNFA. In the years that followed, he built an important client network ‘which he directed with growing authoritarianism’ and went on to become powerful on the national scene. In an age when Africans had few avenues to assert their control and influence, sport provided one such opportunity. Under Ngwenya, spectators had to pay an admission fee for all matches and the DDNFA’s budget soon became the largest of any African organization in the country. Indeed, it trebled from £4 000 to £12 000 between 1953 and 1960. He used this money to purchase a bus for the association, send teams to Mozambique and the then Southern Rhodesia, and hire a professional coach (Topper Brown). This made him a favourite with supporters who were seeking success and ways to unwind after a week of hard work.

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<sup>106</sup> Alegi, *The Football Heritage Complex*, 419.

<sup>107</sup> Alegi, *The Football Heritage Complex*, 419.

<sup>108</sup> Alegi. “Sport, Race and Liberation Before Apartheid.”

<sup>109</sup> Magubane, “Sport and Politics,” 53.

Ngwenya became president of the SAAFA in 1954. During his reign, Durban was the powerhouse of Natal soccer which it effectively controlled. His restaurant near the Somtseu Road Ground secured contracts to cater meals for visiting teams. It was alleged that the gate attendants, whom he appointed, helped him to defraud the association. The wealth that Ngwenya acquired enabled him to create a 'football patronage machine [that] exemplified how urban black entrepreneurs built local networks of power, and sometimes wealth, that were only tangentially connected to, or even in competition with, the aims of contemporary formal political organisations like the ANC.' Conflict within the DDNFA led to an implosion in the later 1950s and the exposure of Ngwenya's activities. One group split from the association at the 1958 AGM and formed the Durban and County African Football Association (DCAAF). By the time of the 1959 AGM there was widespread unhappiness with the way in which Ngwenya was running soccer, and there was a unanimous vote to appoint a commission of inquiry into the association. The five-person commission interviewed 24 people over four months, and produced a 39 page report that provided a mass of evidence of corruption and misconduct on Ngwenya's part. This included the unauthorized use of funds, excessive payments to gate keepers, the purchase of a farm, payment of bribes, and unauthorized payments to executive members. Ngwenya rejected the report and dismissed the commissioners; at the 1960 AGM he spoke in Zulu to secure the support of working class Africans and maintain power. But as Alegi points out, events in South African soccer overtook him.

Although soccer was dominated by elites, Alegi notes that, by the end of the 1930s, it ceased to be a pastime for the *kholwa* elite and integrated itself into the everyday life of Durban's mostly Zulu-speaking African population.<sup>110</sup> Industrialisation, urbanisation, and racial segregation contributed to soccer's growth as a popular pastime and to the particular form it took.<sup>111</sup> Alegi observes that:

Working-class Africans' low wages and long work hours made weekend trips across greater Durban to play and watch football both time-consuming and expensive. Many players undertook long journeys on foot or bicycle from their homes to the grounds, often arriving late for kickoff and sapped of energy. With access to only three grounds in Durban until the mid-1930s, African footballers displayed determination and commitment in order to run a long soccer season from April to November, and, occasionally, into

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<sup>110</sup> Alegi, "Sport, Race and Liberation Before Apartheid."

<sup>111</sup> Alegi, "Sport, Race and Liberation Before Apartheid."

December. Weekend matches regularly attracted about 5,000 spectators, but big rivalries, semi-finals and finals drew crowds twice that size.<sup>112</sup>

Bernard Magubane pointed out some time ago that soccer was an important part of the lives of urban Africans:

After a week's work in the world of the white man, the Africans stream onto the football grounds ... Momentarily their emotional life which is often subdued and repressed during the week ... is allowed to break through... The drudgery which their life imposes on them is temporarily forgotten ... This pre-occupation with football matches makes life worth living despite its frustration.<sup>113</sup>

As football 'became the leviathan of Black sport, Whites turned increasingly to rugby and cricket.'<sup>114</sup>

The DDNFA resisted attempts by the municipality to interfere in the organisation. For example, officials met with the municipality on 15 November 1930 to voice their concerns. The meeting was attended by Councillors Dr Arbuckle (Chairman, Native Administration Committee), Riches, Clark, and Wanless as well as the Welfare Officer. The DDNFA was represented by T.H.D. Ngcobo, its Honorary President, and five other members including Luthuli, who was appointed speaker.<sup>115</sup> At that time, the DDNFA had 24 clubs with 900 members from the 'whole of what is known as the coastal belt,' with the 'entire running and management in the hands of Natives.' The DDNFA complained that Rawlins wanted them to stop charging entrance fees for matches, that he tried to force them to allow white referees to officiate at their matches, and that he brought the Mayor to the grounds without consulting with them.<sup>116</sup>

Ngcobo made it clear that the DDNFA was a 'properly constituted Football Association conducting the game in accordance with the Laws of the game as published by the International Football Association.... Our connections and activities are more than local.'

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<sup>112</sup> Alegi, "Sport, Race and Liberation Before Apartheid."

<sup>113</sup> Magubane, "Sports and politics," 53.

<sup>114</sup> Alegi, "The Football Heritage Complex," 420.

<sup>115</sup> Notes of Native Administration Committee Interview with Durban & District Native Football Association, 15 November 1930. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/21165, 352.

<sup>116</sup> Notes of Native Administration Committee Interview with Durban & District Native Football Association, 15 November 1930. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/21165, 352.

The DDNFA was insistent that Rawlins ‘should ... not interfere with the administration by Natives of their organisation.’<sup>117</sup> Luthuli pointed out that they only charged for “big” games and that the approximately ten pounds that they raised was used to hire tog labour to maintain the grounds and send representative teams to play in Pietermaritzburg and Northern Natal. After listening to the DDNFA, Dr. Arbuckle called on all parties to work together; however, he insisted that all sports issues had to be directed to Rawlins.<sup>118</sup>

By 1933, the DDNFA had three sub-unions: Central (30 teams), North Coast (eight) and South Coast (seven). The association catered for players covering the area between the coast and Inchanga and from Tugela to Umtavuna, including Zululand.<sup>119</sup> The games drew around 5000 spectators each week.<sup>120</sup> A rival Durban Bantu Football Association (DBFA) came into being in 1932. The DBFA had eight clubs but was not recognised by the Council and thus did not have access to soccer fields.<sup>121</sup> However, the DDNFA regarded the new organisation as a threat and called on the Town Council to ignore the new body in order not to ‘encourage division within one house.’<sup>122</sup> The Town Council did give the DBFA permission to use the Dalton Road ground but when its teams took to the field on 28 April 1934, DDNFA officials also took the field with African policemen from the Dalton Road barracks and spectators ‘imbued with belligerent spirit and armed with sticks.’ The DBFA teams were forced off the field.<sup>123</sup> It was subsequently given facilities at Congella.<sup>124</sup>

In July 1929, the Town Council agreed to build three soccer fields and a tennis court at Somtseu Road.<sup>125</sup> By 1931 there was one more ground at Dalton Road.<sup>126</sup> However, the shortage of facilities was recognised by Rawlins who helped form the Bantu Recreational Ground Association (BRGA) on 11 April 1931. According to the BRGA’s constitution, it

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<sup>117</sup> Letter from T. Ngcobo to Dr Arbuckle, Chairman, Native Administration Committee. Attached to Notes of Native Administration Committee Interview with Durban & District Native Football Association, 15 November 1930. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/21165, 352.

<sup>118</sup> Notes of Native Administration Committee Interview with Durban & District Native Football Association, 15 November 1930. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/21165, 352.

<sup>119</sup> Letter from P.D. Mashao, General-Secretary, Durban and Districts Football Association, to The Manager, Municipal native Affairs Department, 11 December 1933. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1165, 352.

<sup>120</sup> Letter from Douglas Evans to Councillor J.L. Farrell, Chairman, Native Administration Committee, 31 January 1935. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/3/1606, 352 vol.1.

<sup>121</sup> Letter from A.P. Sibankulu, President, Durban Bantu Football Association, to Native Welfare Officer, 8 October 1933. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/21165, 352.

<sup>122</sup> P.D. Mashao, General Secretary, DDNFA, to Town Clerk, 24 April 1934, NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/21165, 30/352.

<sup>123</sup> Letter from S.P. Nxumalo to Welfare Officer, 30 April 1934. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/21165, 352.

<sup>124</sup> A.B. Sibankulu, President, DBFA, to Town Clerk, 9 May 1934. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1165, 30/352.

<sup>125</sup> NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1165, 2/352. Extract from Minutes of the Durban Town Council, 22 July 1929.

<sup>126</sup> Report of the Native Welfare Officer, 8 July 1930. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1147, 7/323h.

aimed to promote physical recreation such as athletics, cycling, boxing, football, cricket, and tennis and provide grounds for this purpose.<sup>127</sup> Durban's Mayor, the Rev. A. Lamont, was the first patron and trustee of the Association and Campbell of Mount Edgecombe was elected president.<sup>128</sup> The NAFA initially boycotted the BRGA because it was controlled by whites and due to the desire for a greater share of gate receipts, but subsequently participated 'guardedly'.<sup>129</sup>

Maurice Webb, Clem Woods, A.F. Baumann, and D.S.E. Anderson of the Rotary Club of Durban met with the Town Council in July 1937 to request additional grounds. Woods stressed the 'desirability of affording the native community, particularly the unskilled class, adequate outlet for their superfluous energies by means of healthy recreational facilities.' Four more fields were set aside for African soccer near the Indian Magazine Barracks.<sup>130</sup> Alegi observes that, the DDNFA 'worked the system to its advantage, thereby moderating the pernicious effect of white intrusion.'<sup>131</sup> The association maintained its control of soccer. When the NAD requested that a white official be co-opted onto the soccer body in 1956, the DDNFA refused, claiming that the NAD wanted a 'white man to make a living on what Africans had achieved unassisted by the white man, save the honourable Councillor Mr. D. Evans.'<sup>132</sup>

The DDNFA was affiliated to the NNFA as well as the Bantu Recreational Grounds Association. It paid an annual subscription to these bodies and handed over 10 percent of gate takings to the BRGA.<sup>133</sup> Local company, Bakers Ltd. donated a trophy in 1935 for an annual national tournament organised by the NNFA, including the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal.<sup>134</sup> The tournament rotated between Durban, Ladysmith, and Pietermaritzburg.<sup>135</sup> The Bakers Cup was renamed the Moroka-Baloyi Cup in 1937.

### **The development of Indian Soccer to the 1940s**

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<sup>127</sup> Report of Native Welfare Officer, 20 May 1931. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1166, 2/352.

<sup>128</sup> Report of Native Welfare Officer, 20 May 1931. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1166, 2/352.

<sup>129</sup> Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie*, 348.

<sup>130</sup> Minutes of Meeting between Town Council, Durban Rotary Club and Bantu Social Centre, 19 July 1937. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1606, 352

<sup>131</sup> Alegi, "Sport, Race and Liberation Before Apartheid."

<sup>132</sup> Kuper, *An African Bourgeoisie*, 349.

<sup>133</sup> Secretary, DDNFA to Town Clerk, 26 January 1934. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1167, 30/352.

<sup>134</sup> Minutes of Native Advisory Board, 10 July 1935. NA, 3/DBN, 1/2/12/1/2

<sup>135</sup> Secretary, DDNFA to Town Clerk, 26 January 1934. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1167, 30/352.



Raath describes football in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries ‘as one means of fighting back the authorities’. Gandhi organised soccer teams at Indian ‘communities, or ashrams, which he set up.’<sup>136</sup> Matches were played at Phoenix in Durban, Pretoria and Tolstoy Farm in Johannesburg, which Gandhi purchased to ‘maintain families of jailed resisters’.<sup>137</sup> In 1910 an historic match was staged between a ‘team of Passive Resisters’ from Pretoria and their Johannesburg counterparts on a barren surface at the Johannesburg Rangers Mayfair ground.<sup>138</sup>

In common with African soccer, educated and trader elites such as Albert Christopher, B.L.E. Sigamoney, E.M. Paruk and S. Emmammally, who were prominent in a number of organisations, also shaped sports associations. Soccer was the most popular sport amongst Indians, although they also played cricket and tennis and participated in cycling, athletics, boxing and wrestling. A Natal Indian Football Association was formed in 1886 with four Durban-based members, viz. Union Jacks, Eastern Stars, Yorkshire and Western Stars.<sup>139</sup> The Durban District Indian Football Association was formed in 1892, while Mayville (1902) and South Coast (1914) formed separate associations. There were around 40 clubs and 1 000 members in Durban by 1912.<sup>140</sup>

The organization of soccer reinforced race identities. Indians played amongst themselves in Durban. This was subsequently extended to Natal with inter-town matches between teams from Durban, Greytown, Pietermaritzburg, Dundee, Stanger and Ladysmith who played for the "Gandhi Memorial Cup" donated by businessman Parsee Rustomjee.<sup>141</sup> In 1903, Sam China of Kimberly, who had come to Natal as an indentured migrant, sponsored a trophy for the annual inter-provincial tournament known as the Sam China Cup. As one periodical noted in the 1940s, the Sam China Cup helped forge pan-Indian bonds across South Africa:

The personal contacts and bonds of friendship created between us ... are yet another advantage of these inter-Provincial tournaments.... Soccer, being the most popular game as far as South African Indians are concerned, must be recognised as a dynamic force in the

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<sup>136</sup> Peter Raath, “Fifa World Cup 2010: Kicking out apartheid,” accessed 23 January 2013, [http://www.dnaindia.com/sport/report\\_fifa-world-cup-2010-kicking-out-apartheid\\_1392420-all](http://www.dnaindia.com/sport/report_fifa-world-cup-2010-kicking-out-apartheid_1392420-all).

<sup>137</sup> Raath, “Fifa World Cup 2010.”

<sup>138</sup> Raath, “Fifa World Cup 2010.”

<sup>139</sup> C.G. Henning, *Indentured Indians in Natal, 1860 – 1917* (New Delhi: Promilla and Company Publishers, 1993), 136.

<sup>140</sup> *Indian Opinion*, October 5, 1912.

<sup>141</sup> *Indian Opinion*, March 3, 1915.

way of character building. It is for this reason that Indian soccer administrators wield a big influence in the lives of our people.<sup>142</sup>

Soccer transcended national boundaries, with Albert Christopher and C.F.Andrews organising a tour of India by South African Indians in 1921 and the Indians reciprocating in 1934. The Indians won both series convincingly. When the Indian team toured South Africa in 1934, *Indian Opinion* underscored the value of the tour: 'We wish that the visit will not mean the mere playing of soccer but that it will draw the minds of their brethren living in this far off land more towards the Motherland and her great ancient culture.'<sup>143</sup> Reflecting on these visits in the 1940s, *The Leader* commented:

On the last visit (1934) even those men and women who had passed the century mark in years turned up not so much to see football but to get a glimpse of the people way back from home.... It made the Indian people conscious of their tradition and background. We are South African by birth ... but we still maintain our cultural heritage and spiritual ties with India.... India is the fountain-head of our origin and when the proposed visit materialises the Indian people in South Africa will take a special pride in recognising the fact that they are Indians and they have connections with the Motherland.<sup>144</sup>

However, as with African soccer, there was an ongoing struggle for better facilities. Indian elites formed the Durban United Indian Sports Association in 1911 to coordinate this struggle. In May 1912 lawyer Joseph Royeppen wrote to the Town Council requesting a ground. The Town Council replied in June that it had allocated a site.<sup>145</sup> Despite many complaints over the years, nothing transpired. Almost a decade later, Albert Christopher noted in a letter to the Council that Indians had developed and maintained grounds at their own expense since the 1880s:

We appeal to you to deal out justice to us irrespective of our race or colour so that there may be no occasion for it to be said that the gift of the Council was a scrap of paper where the rights of the minority were concerned.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>142</sup>*The Leader*, September 3, 1947.

<sup>143</sup>*Indian Opinion*, June 8, 1934.

<sup>144</sup>*The Leader*, June 19, 1948.

<sup>145</sup>*Indian Opinion*, 13 July 1912.

<sup>146</sup> A. Christopher of the Durban Sports Ground Association to the Mayor, 30 August 1920. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/164, 15/31.

It was only in 1924 that the Council agreed to lease a ground to the DISGA for a period of 25 years, provided that the association laid out and equipped the grounds.<sup>147</sup> Traders and educated elites such as Parsee Rustomjee, E.M. Paruk, B.M. Singh, and V.S.C. Pather took leadership and drove the project which eventually led to the opening of Curries Fountain. As indicated below, class (and race) was thus important in the evolution and development of Indian football:

... the very individuals who were prominent in social, religious, educational, and economic bodies were also in the leadership of most sports bodies. Their concern and contribution was not confined to a narrow domain but affected all aspects of Indian life in Durban. There was a close link between sports, politics and social class in Durban. The merchants and educated elite, who had evolved into a self-conscious elite class seeking political and economic rights on par with those, enjoyed by Whites, saw sport as a means of moulding Indians along the lines of Whites and thus placing them in a better position to demand these rights. Sport was seen as one of the avenues which needed to be cultivated to pave the way for the eventual assimilation of Indians into the evolving Durban society.<sup>148</sup>

### **African-Indian relations, 1920s to the 1940s**

Tension between Indians and Africans in Natal became 'more pronounced' through the 1930s and 1940s as they competed for limited resources in the city.<sup>149</sup> Commenting on the industrial expansion around the time of World War II, Burrows held that a 'fear of competition' led to the 'intensification of the colour bar' rather than its reduction.<sup>150</sup> Burrows noted that while 'a certain amount of genuine co-operation between workers of different races and colour' did exist, it did not 'go very deep.'<sup>151</sup>

As Kirk points out, this tension was evident from the nineteenth century with the arrival of Indians, which suppressed wages and the bargaining power of African labour; they also competed to buy land.<sup>152</sup> This tension increased with urbanization as Africans took up unskilled positions in the labour market while Indians moved into semi-skilled

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<sup>147</sup> Extracts from Minutes of the Town Council meeting, 6 March 1924. NA, 3/DBN, 4/1/2/1165, 15/31.

<sup>148</sup> Sport and Recreation in Durban in the 1930s.

<sup>149</sup> Kirk, "The 1949 Durban Riots," 11.

<sup>150</sup> H.R. Burrows. *Indian Life and Labour in Natal* (Durban: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1943), 14.

<sup>151</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life*, 1943, 14.

<sup>152</sup> See F. Meer, "Indentured Labour and Group Formation in apartheid society," in *Race & Class* XXVI 4 (1985): 45-60.

employment.<sup>153</sup> Racial stereotypes were formed, facilitated in part by the fact that the settlers placed Africans ‘in positions of authority over Indians, as overseers and policemen, and often used them to punish Indians.’<sup>154</sup>

Maharaj points out, that, given their small numbers, Indians came to see themselves as ‘a vulnerable ethnic minority’ subjected to repatriation and labelled as ‘aliens in the country of their birth.’<sup>155</sup> From an African perspective, however, Indians received preferential treatment. Indians enjoyed freedom of movement; could join trade unions, secure better paying jobs, had job security as they were “permanent” urban dwellers, and could purchase property.<sup>156</sup> There was little interaction outside the workplace, as we see in the example of soccer. Furthermore, the interaction that did take place took the form of the African working class being ‘a customer of Indian stores, a passenger of Indian buses, and would sometimes be supervised by Indian foreman.’<sup>157</sup>

Webster points to four areas of interaction which seemed ‘to give daily confirmation of the African stereotype of the Indian in hostile terms.’ These were that ‘most shopkeepers in the black areas were Indians’; as passengers on Indian buses, the landlord-tenant relationship in Cato Manor, and competition for jobs.<sup>158</sup> Indians came to be seen as “privileged” because most ‘social contact was generally one of the African worker and the Indian bourgeois or petty-bourgeois groups.’<sup>159</sup> One of the remarkable features of the urban experience was de facto residential segregation long before apartheid for large numbers of Indians and Africans.

Urban growth increased demand for rental shelter as Indian traders and their workers ‘who once lived over their shops’ moved further afield where they sought housing. Africans moving into the city often competed for housing in these same spaces. The result was that people of different races and classes lived in close proximity to one another in many neighbourhoods. Burrows wrote at the time that many came to ‘suspect or dislike neighbours

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<sup>153</sup> Kirk, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 40.

<sup>154</sup> Ashwin Desai and Goolam Vahed (2011). *Between Apartheid and Neoliberalism in Durban's Indian Quarter*, *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 22 (4): 43-49. 23.

<sup>155</sup> Maharaj, “Ethnicity, Class, State and Conflict,” 70.

<sup>156</sup> Kirk, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 40.

<sup>157</sup> Kirk, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 11.

<sup>158</sup> E.C. Webster. “The 1949 Durban Riots” – A Case Study in Race and Class” in P.L. Bonner, ed., *Working Papers in Sothorn African Studies*. Papers presented at the A.S.I. African Studies Seminar. (Johannesburg, African Studies Institute Publications, 1977), 32 – 35.

<sup>159</sup> Kirk, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 11.

whose standard of life, perhaps narrowly interpreted, is appreciably lower than their own, more so if they belong to a race or colour which for that time and place, and in their view, is held to be inferior.’<sup>160</sup> The state played a role in shaping relations between various groups in urban areas through its lack of proper town planning and its acceptance of racial difference as ‘a determining factor in planning the economic structure of Natal’.<sup>161</sup>

Another factor that caused friction was the differential treatment of African and Indian workers. The Industrial Conciliation Act placed Indians on a ‘little better footing than Africans’ who were prohibited from registering their trade unions.<sup>162</sup> Africans were thus denied the ‘opportunity of benefiting from formal collective bargaining.’<sup>163</sup> African traders also felt aggrieved. The 1949 Riots Commission noted that ‘the emerging African trading class felt that their advancement was blocked by Indians because whenever they applied for licence the application would be opposed by an Indian.’<sup>164</sup> Business competition thus became grounded on race. Webster noted that the Motor Carrier Transportation Act ‘tended to operate in favour of those who were already established in business’ as it stipulated that ‘no new licence may be granted if transportation facilities’ were already in existence in the area that an application was made for.<sup>165</sup> This made it impossible for the emerging African trader class to break into this sector.

As Kirk notes, these differences led to the ‘stereotyping’ of Indians as exploiters<sup>166</sup> even though the majority of Indians were extremely poor. They did not ‘enjoy the economic or social privileges of the higher class Indians.’<sup>167</sup> Burrows shows that there was much hardship amongst Indians, with many workers living ‘near starvation levels’.<sup>168</sup> Class is important. According to Kirk, it ‘emphasises a set of inter-group relations broadly based on economic determinants and ideological components.’<sup>169</sup> There were clear class differences amongst Indians and Africans. Webster refers to the embryonic formation of two broad social classes

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<sup>160</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 53.

<sup>161</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 53.

<sup>162</sup> Webster, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 38.

<sup>163</sup> Webster, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 38.

<sup>164</sup> Webster, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 38.

<sup>165</sup> Webster, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 39.

<sup>166</sup> Kirk, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 12.

<sup>167</sup> Kirk, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 12.

<sup>168</sup> Burrows, *Indian Life and Labour*, 1952, 12.

<sup>169</sup> Kirk, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 12.

among Africans in urban areas caused by the colonisers 'changing mode of production' and industrial capitalism:

In the first instance a large relatively undifferentiated class of wage-labourers stratified broadly into an unskilled sub-proletariat of 'migrant' workers living in compounds and shacks, and a more settled semi-skilled manual work force. A tiny non-manual elite of clerks, nurses, interpreters and teachers existed within this wage labouring class. A second embryonic class can be seen emerging in the early stages of urbanisation of self-employed blacks, mostly traders. I will call them petty-bourgeois, although this term is somewhat of a sponge 'catch-all' concept.<sup>170</sup>

Webster argues that 'classes emerge or form when an aggregate or collectivity of people who share the same relationship to the means of production become aware of their common interest and unite to promote them – in Marx's oft-quoted language, a transformation takes place from a class-in-itself to a class-for-itself.'<sup>171</sup> While the African and Indian working class should, objectively, have been forging alliances, this does not happen when the subjective perception of class (the necessary condition for class consciousness) is 'inhibited by ethnicity and race prejudice.'<sup>172</sup> Rather:

the emergence of a class is 'stunted' through restrictions on its ability to organise or promote its collective interests either by statutory or non-statutory means ... or it may mean the limits placed on proletarianisation contained within laws such as the Group Areas Act which places obstacles in the way of African settling permanently in the urban areas.<sup>173</sup>

This may well apply to the context of urban Natal where Africans were restricted by statutory regulations and where state policy helped forge race identities. Webster adds that class and ethnicity:

... became salient in South African society because the process of class formation and its dialectical opposite, class suppression, takes place within the process of differential incorporation of anscriptive groups into the social structure. This is why class conflict in South Africa is manifested in a social and ethnic idiom. This is the dynamic inter-

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<sup>170</sup> Webster, "The 1949 Durban Riots," 8.

<sup>171</sup> Webster, "The 1949 Durban Riots," 2.

<sup>172</sup> Webster, "The 1949 Durban Riots," 7.

<sup>173</sup> Webster, "The 1949 Durban Riots," 8.

relationship between class, race and ethnicity in South Africa. Ethnicity and race are not necessarily varieties of false consciousness; they can be aids to social consciousness.<sup>174</sup>

Maharaj points out that ‘the formation of ethnic identity was influenced by struggles within groups, between groups, and between the state and its various ethnic populations.’<sup>175</sup> Prior to the 1940s, Black politics was also racialised and political organisations such as the NIC and ANC ‘did relatively little or nothing to repair the strained inter-group relations’ and played little role in forging cross-race relations.<sup>176</sup>

### **Concluding remarks**

This overview focused on the settlement of Indians and Africans in Durban and their leisuretime activities. The majority of urban Indians and Africans lived in Durban and it was these centres that dominated sport. The important themes for our purposes are that the leisuretime activities of Indians and Africans were primarily male institutional forms of leisure; the state played a more significant role in providing for and seeking to control African sport than it did in the case of Indians; there were clear class distinctions within “African” and “Indian”, with elites dominating sports administration; and that sports activities were largely racially segregated.

This reflected the broader society where the lives of Indians and Africans were mostly racially segregated; when they did interact, it was mostly in competition for work, housing and other services. This was a potent mix that could, and did explode.

In October 1932 a member of the white Durban Rotary Club organized an Indo-African "Goodwill" soccer match ‘to bring about reciprocal understanding between the Indian and native communities of Durban.’<sup>177</sup> There is no indication of the score but the Town Clerk noted that Africans’ response was poor.<sup>178</sup> Sport was, as a rule, not a medium for cross-racial contact.

In this context, could the NISB help to break down these racial barriers?

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<sup>174</sup> Webster, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 43.

<sup>175</sup> Maharaj, *Ethnicity, Class, State and Conflict*, 87.

<sup>176</sup> Kirk, “The 1949 Durban Riots,” 33.

<sup>177</sup> Letter from A. Peters to Town Clerk, 12 Oct 1932 4/1/2/1166 3/DBN 352.

<sup>178</sup> Letter from Town Clerk to Native Welfare Officer 13 Oct. 1932, 3/DBN 4/1/2/1166 352.

The remainder of this thesis examines the tournament and reflects on this question in the concluding chapter.



## Chapter three

### Crossing boundaries: The Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board, 1946-1951

This chapter examines the formation of the Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board (NISB) in 1946 and the first five years of its existence. The NISB was formed in the aftermath of the Second World War in the context of a rapidly expanding urban African population. This period was also marked by heightened labour unrest, the 1946-48 Indian passive resistance campaign in Durban against land segregation, the coming to power of the National Party (NP) in 1948, and the 1949 Durban racial riots involving Indians and Africans. The formation of the NISB should be viewed in this broader context, as some of these events impacted on it while the Board also reflected these broader tendencies.

#### Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board (NISB)

The NISB was formed in 1946; two years before the NP came to power and implemented its policy of apartheid. There was very little media coverage of the formation of the NISB and archival records and even the autobiographies of the founders provide scanty details. However, the names of Albert John Luthuli and the Reverend Bernard Sigamoney are associated with the Board. Nkosi Luthuli is, of course, an icon of South African history; his contribution to sport and politics was discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>179</sup> His involvement in the NISB appears to have been his last major contribution to sport as he became more and more involved in the ANC and spearheaded the anti-apartheid struggle. He did not disappear completely from soccer as he continued to hold ceremonial posts as “patron” of organisations such as the DDAFA, SAAFA, NISB, and the South African Soccer Federation (SASF).

The Natal African Football Association (NAFA), Natal Indian Football Association (NIFA), and the Natal Coloured Football Association (NCFA) were equal partners in the NISB. Aside from Luthuli, the other individual whose name is synonymous with the early NISB is the Reverend Bernard Lazarus Emmanuel (B.L.E.) Sigamoney (1888-1963), a political activist, Christian minister, champion of non-racial sport, trade unionist, and educator who to this day is regarded as ‘Durban’s most significant socialist and Indian trade unionist’<sup>180</sup> A grandson of indentured migrants Sigamoney taught at Estcourt Indian High School and St Aidan’s School

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<sup>179</sup> For a critical biography of Albert Luthuli, see Scott Couper, *Albert Luthuli: Bound by Faith* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2010).

<sup>180</sup> ‘Bernard Lazarus Sigamoney’, South African History Online (SAHO), accessed 20 August 2013, [www.sahistory.org.za/home/people/community](http://www.sahistory.org.za/home/people/community).

in Durban. He served as the first secretary of the Indian Workers Industrial Union in 1917 and was also a sports administrator and a prominent boxing promoter in Durban until 1922 when he 'retired' from politics and studied for four years to become an Anglican pastor in Lincolnshire, England.

When he returned in 1927 he relocated to Johannesburg. Influenced by Clements Kadalie's Industrial Commercial and Workers Union (ICU), Sigamoney was involved in labour organisations during the 1930s and 1940s. He was instrumental in forming an Inter-Race Soccer Board in the Transvaal, where he worked with the likes of Dr Williamson Godfrey, Dr Ray E. Phillips, Dr Dexter Taylor, Dr Xuma, P.S. Joshi, K.H. Tavarua, and Solomon Sonoane to organise "friendly" soccer matches between Africans, Indians, and Coloureds every year from the late 1920s. After much discussion, they constituted themselves into the Transvaal Inter-Race Board in 1935 and organised an annual Inter-Race Soccer Tournament for the "Reverend Sigamoney Trophy".<sup>181</sup> Sigamoney's principles of non-racial sport make him an "unsung hero" who fought for justice in sport until his death on 3 April 1963. Alegi describes Sigamoney as an 'enthusiastic sport organiser in the finest "muscular Christian" tradition'.<sup>182</sup>

It is not clear how Luthuli and Sigamoney came to form the NISB but they had a lot in common – a love for sport and working for their "people" and both were former teachers, educated and persons of strong faith who shared similar ideologies. It is also not clear what their subsequent involvement in the NISB was as they were involved in a host of other activities. Alegi writes that the two joined the NISB in "partnership", while others have noted that Luthuli 'spearheaded' or 'instigated' the idea. Whatever the case, both men were familiar with the Natal situation even though Sigamoney had relocated to Johannesburg and Luthuli left Durban in January 1936 to take up the position of elected chief in his home village of Groutville near Stanger on the Natal North Coast.<sup>183</sup>

Other people who played a part in the formation of the NISB played secondary fiddle to Luthuli and Sigamoney. The key Coloured official in the negotiations was Eddie G. Rooks, president of the NCFA. The NISB held its first AGM in April 1946. This meeting

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<sup>181</sup> The TISB officials were Graham Ballendin (president), Willie Ernest (vice-president), Dr. Ray Phillips (treasurer), and S. Sonoane (secretary). In W. Ernest, 'Inter-Race soccer in the Transvaal,' In *South African Soccer Federation. Souvenir Brochure* (Durban, 1952), 51.

<sup>182</sup> Alegi, "Sport, Race and Liberation Before Apartheid."

<sup>183</sup> Alegi, "Sport, Race and Liberation Before Apartheid."

emphasised that NISB was ‘responsible for the promotion of inter-race soccer matches between the various Non-European’, as they were called in that era, race groups.<sup>184</sup> The first NISB officials were Eddie G. Rooks (president), A.C. Maseko (vice-president), George Singh (secretary / treasurer), Wolpert and Abrahams (auditors) and Dr D.D.T. Jabavu (patron).<sup>185</sup> Another founding member was C.W. Nxumalo, who took over as president in 1949.<sup>186</sup> The meeting was also attended by George Singh, E.P. Naidoo and S.L. Singh of the NIFA;<sup>187</sup> and C.G. Montgomery, E.G. Rooks and A.F. Woods of the NCFA; while the NAFA was represented by L.B. Msimang, A.C. Maseko and E.E. Ntombela.<sup>188</sup> Alfred James Abraham who died on 31 December 1952 was also active in the formation of the NISB. “Alf”, as he was affectionately known, was the NCFA treasurer and was vice-president of the organisation at the time of his death on 31 December 1952.<sup>189</sup>

The choice of D.D.T. Jabavu as patron underscores the fact that the educated elite dominated a cross-section of organisations. Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu was born in the Cape Colony in 1885. His father, J.T. Jabavu was a journalist (editor of *Imvo Zabantsundu* - “Black Opinion”) and a founding member of the South African Native College (Fort Hare). Jabavu junior attended school at Lovedale and completed a B.A. degree at London University and a teacher's certificate at Birmingham University. He was a professor at the University of Fort Hare until his death. He served as President of the All-Africa Convention (AAC) which was convened in 1935 to form a united opposition against the segregation laws proposed by the Hertzog Government. However, he later fell out with the AAC because of his moderate politics.<sup>190</sup>

Alegi suggests that the NISB ‘represented an initial, perhaps necessary, step towards challenging apartheid in sport.’ Sports administrators from the region sought to transform ‘sport into a potent force for racial integration, equality, and human rights.’<sup>191</sup> ‘I think what has attracted me as much as the game has been the opportunity to meet all sorts of people,

<sup>184</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer Board Meeting’, *The Leader*, April 20, 1946, 6.

<sup>185</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer Board Meeting’, *The Leader*, April 20, 1946, 6.

<sup>186</sup> E.G. Rooks, ‘Inter-Race in Natal,’ In *South African Soccer Federation. Souvenir Brochure* (Durban, 1952): 67.

<sup>187</sup> At the NIFA’s AGM in March 1946, R. Kallie (president), M. Govender (treasurer), and A.C. Naidoo (secretary) were elected, while S.L. Singh, George Singh and E.P. Naidoo were NISB delegates. See ‘Soccer Coaches Needed’ *The Leader*, March 16, 1946, 6.

<sup>188</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer Board Meeting’, *The Leader*, April 20, 1946, 6.

<sup>189</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer Official Dies’, *The Graphic*, January 16, 1953, p. 2.

<sup>190</sup> ‘D.D.T. Jabavu,’ accessed 29 August 2013, <http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/davidson-don-tengo-jabavu>.

<sup>191</sup> Alegi, “The Football Heritage Complex,” 480.

from the loftiest to the most disreputable,' wrote Luthuli in his autobiography, *Let My People Go*.<sup>192</sup> In 1944, the year Luthuli joined the ANC and two years before the formation of the NISB, the ANC sponsored an inter-race soccer match at the Bantu Sports Club. The match had political undertones as it was organised to raise funds for the ANC.

The lines between what was political and what was not are blurred. Bernard Magubane notes that the distinction 'between the political and non-political is not easily drawn, more particularly since the African associations are so exposed to many ways of political control.'<sup>193</sup> The NISB emerged at the same time as Black political movements assumed national prominence and membership often overlapped. In fact, the NISB, that aimed to bridge the racial divide in sport between Africans, Indians, and Coloureds in Natal, was ahead of the political movements which followed separate trajectories until Dr Monty Naicker gained control of the NIC in 1945 and Dr Yusuf Dadoo took control of the TIC around the same time. Naicker and Dadoo actively sought to work with the ANC; in a joint declaration issued on 9 March 1947, Dr A. B. Xuma, president-general of the ANC, Naicker, and Dadoo committed themselves to 'working out a practical basis of co-operation between national organisations of the non-European peoples.'<sup>194</sup> This paved the way for the non-racial struggles of the 1950s.

### **The Singh Trophy**

The Natal Inter-Race Soccer Tournament was officially launched in 1946 when the first series of matches were played for the Singh Trophy. The trophy was co-sponsored by George Singh, the first secretary / treasurer of NISB, and another prominent sport administrator, S.L. Singh. *The Leader* reported in 1946 that 'S.L. Singh and George Singh have promised to donate a trophy valued at over 75 guineas for inter-race competition'.<sup>195</sup> In 1950 the newspaper reported: 'For the purpose of this tournament, Messrs. S.L. Singh and George Singh, two leading soccer administrators, presented a handsome trophy which is called the Singh Trophy.'<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>192</sup>Laverty, "Sports Diplomacy and Apartheid South Africa."

<sup>193</sup> Magubane, "Sports and politics," viii.

<sup>194</sup> Desai and Vahed. *Monty Naicker. Between Reason and Treason*. (Scottsville: Shuter and Shooter, 2010), 240-268, 43.

<sup>195</sup> 'Inter-Race Soccer Board Meeting', *The Leader*, April 20, 1946, 6.

<sup>196</sup> 'Inter-Race Soccer Series Begin Tomorrow', *The Leader*, July, 15, 1950, 10.

However, George Singh was usually credited with donating the trophy (see, for example, Zeph Dhlomo's article on *Ilanga*).<sup>197</sup> Singh was an active sports administrator from the 1940s to the 1970s. He was born in Durban and studied law at the University of the Witwatersrand as the University of Natal did not admit Black South Africans to study law. He was also active in the trade union and political movements. He served as an official of the Durban Indian Municipal Employees Society (DIMES) and was one of the members of the NIC who volunteered for arrest during the 1946-48 passive resistance campaign. Affectionately known as "Geo" in football circles, Singh was an ardent aficionado of the "beautiful game", a phrase used globally to describe football. He made an immense contribution to non-racial soccer in South Africa and supported the international boycott of South African sport during the apartheid era.<sup>198</sup>

Singh's contribution to non-racial sport in South Africa was officially acknowledged on 27 September 2006 when he was posthumously awarded the "Order of Ikhamanga" in the silver category by then President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki for his 'excellent contribution to soccer and non-racism, non-sexism and justice in sport and society.'<sup>199</sup> He was inducted into the South African Sport and Arts Hall of Fame (SASAHOF) in 2007, which was established by former Springbok rugby fly-half, Naas Botha 'to honour, under one roof, the heroes of sport who have made outstanding contributions to South African sport by virtue of their talent, skill, commitment, sportsmanship and bravery.'<sup>200</sup> During the 1950s Singh led, albeit unsuccessfully, attempts by the non-racial South African Soccer Federation (SASF) to affiliate to the Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA).

### **NISB rules and regulations**

The NISB rules differed from those in place today. While contemporary matches are played over 90 minutes (45 minutes per half), inter-race soccer matches were played over 80 minutes (40 minutes per half). While each team fielded 11 players and reserves were permitted, there

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<sup>197</sup> Zeph Dhlomo. 'Ezebhola eNatali', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, December 1, 1951, 7.

<sup>198</sup> 'George Singh, The Order of Ikhamanga in Silver,' accessed 11 October 2013, <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/pebble.asp?reid=7825>.

<sup>199</sup> 'George Singh, The Order of Ikhamanga in Silver.' Singh is in distinguished company; recipients of this award include the likes of Danny Jordaan, head of South Africa's 2010 FIFA World Cup Local Organising Committee, former South African soccer team (Bafana Bafana) captain Lucas Radebe, legendary Black golfer Sewsunker "Papwa" Sewgolum, and author Bessie Head.

<sup>200</sup> Singh was recognised as an outstanding administrator alongside people like former cricket chief, Dr Ali Bacher, who organised the 2003 Cricket World Cup, Dr Errol Vawda, Professor Dennis Brutus, and former Sports Minister Steve Tshwete. 'About SASAHOF', accessed 15 July 2013, [http://sasahof.co.za/about\\_us.html](http://sasahof.co.za/about_us.html).

was no rule stipulating the number of reserves on the bench. Today, teams are awarded three points for a win, one for a draw, and none for a loss. In inter-race matches, a win was worth two points, a stalemate one point, and a loss zero. The triangular tournament, described as the ‘most coveted trophy in Natal non-European soccer,’<sup>201</sup> was flexible and allowed for a three-way tie as happened in 1960. When two teams tied in 1952, a re-match was scheduled. There was no penalty shoot-out, extra time or other permutations as in contemporary football.

Newspaper reports suggest that inter-race games were exciting and attended by large numbers of Indian, African, and Coloured spectators, but few whites. The tournament usually ran any time between May and October, depending on the availability of playing fields as well as other annual and biennial tournaments organised by the respective Indian, African, and Coloured associations. As noted earlier, the South African Africans Football Association (SAAFA) organised its annual national tournament for the Moroka-Baloyi Cup; the South African Indian Football Association (SAIFA), organised the Sam China Tournament; and the South African Coloured Football Association (SACFA) organised the biennial Stuttaford Trophy. The NAFA, Durban and District African Football Association (DDAFA), and Pietermaritzburg Bantu Football Association (PBFA) organised competitive matches, friendlies and leagues for African teams, while the Durban Indian Football Association (DIFA) organised the Durban Sunday league; there were also Indian leagues in outlying areas such as the South Coast, Mayville, Umzinto, Stanger and elsewhere. Coloureds played matches in Clairwood, south of Durban.

### **Inaugural Inter-Race Tournament, 1946**

The inaugural tournament kicked off with a match between the Indian and Coloured teams on 24 June 1946 at Curries Fountain. While soccer was admittedly very popular among Africans, it is striking that *Ilanga LaseNatali (Natal's Sun)*, a mainly Zulu-language newspaper which usually had a two to four page spread in English, and which was founded by the first president of the African Native National Congress (ANNC), John Dube, in 1903, only published reports of matches in which the African team was involved. *The Leader*, an Indian weekly newspaper, was impartial in its reporting of matches from 1946 until the last match in 1960 and provided details on matches and most line-ups involving all the teams, not just the Indian team.

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<sup>201</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer Begins Today’, *The Leader*, August 14, 1948, 11.

In a match watched by 3000 spectators the Coloureds overcame a 1-0 half time deficit and scored 2 goals in the second half to win the match 2 -1. The line-ups were not published but the match reports in *The Leader*<sup>202</sup> indicate that the Indian team ‘opened the scoring with a well-judged long-range shot from Bulla.’ after 15 minutes.<sup>203</sup> This was after Fishy had failed to score with only the keeper to beat. Lightie Chinniah scored for the Indians but his goal was disallowed for handball, whilst Eksteen and Joseph missed chances for the Coloureds. In the second half, after two fruitless corner kicks the Coloureds equalised: ‘following a clever through pass from Norkie, Josephs took the ball in his stride and beat Hansa beautifully’ to make the scores level.<sup>204</sup> Minutes later, Montgomery scored the winning goal from a free-kick.

Another feature of the reporting in *Ilanga* is the use of words such as *thina*, *awethu* or *akithi* which refer to the Africans as “us” and differentiates the team from “them”, the Indians and Coloureds. This is reflected in some of the letters sent in by readers who were often sarcastic and subjective, and seemed to affirm racial pride. For example, after the Africans trounced the Coloureds in 1946 in the first-ever final of the Singh Trophy, S.T.J Dlamini wrote:

*Babhonya amaKhaladi ... bawakhombisa ukuthi angabafana siyawazala khona azohlala azi futhi ukuthi ibhola alidlalwa ngomlomo lidlalwa ngezinyawo.*<sup>205</sup>

We beat the Coloureds ... and showed them that we are the parents and they are boys so that they will forever know that football is played with feet not through talking.

“*Bhonya*” is a Zulu word meaning to beat a person heartlessly. M.S. Buthelezi’s letter to *Ilanga* also reflected some bragging and sounded antagonistic. In fact Buthelezi likened the match to the national political struggle:

*Lento maZulu iyafana nalempi yenkululeko esiyilwayo nezizwe ezimhlophe ... labafana ... bayazikhombisa izizwe lezi ezisibukela phansi zicabanga ukuthi yizo kuphela ongqongqoshe balelizwe lethu lomdabu likaMthaniya.*<sup>206</sup>

<sup>202</sup> Some of the Coloureds (surnames) who featured in this match were: Jack Starkey, Mohamet, Eksteen, Oliver James, Joseph, Richen, Norkie and Montgomery. The Indians included Hansa the goalkeeper, Fishy, Bulla, “Lightie” Chinniah at centre forward, Ganas at back and Chin and Naidoo, both at full-back.

<sup>203</sup> ‘3,000 Thrilled at Soccer Game. Coloureds XI’s Spectacular win over Indians’, *Leader*, June 29, 1946, 6.

<sup>204</sup> ‘3,000 Thrilled at Soccer Game,’ *Leader*, June 29, 1946, 6.

<sup>205</sup> ‘Abafana Bebhola’, *IlangaLaseNatali*, October 19, 1946, 2.

<sup>206</sup> ‘Abafana BakaNatali’, *IlangaLaseNatali*, October 19, 1946, 12.

Zulu people, the character showed by the Natal African team is similar to this freedom fight that we fighting against white people. These boys are showing these racial groups which are underestimating us by believing that they are “Ministers” in this indigenous land of ours.

The above letter, by a Zulu, an African, goes beyond a soccer field but attaches the elements of nationalism. The letter confirms that the Zulus, or rather indigenous African people, differentiated between themselves as the indigenous populace and “other” South Africans who descendent from foreign lands. The letter emphasises that the land is for indigenous people and that “others” should not assume an ownership or ministerial position in their lands.

In most instances, *Ilanga's* match reports and previews did not mention the names of the Indian and Coloured players. For example, an article would note, *amaKhaladi alibeka phakathi or amaNdiya akora* (“Coloureds or Indians scored”) whereas African players would be named. It was only during previews of the African-Coloured encounter that *Ilanga* mentioned that *amaKhaladi asevela kumaNdiya lapho afika adla umsobho*<sup>207</sup> (“Coloureds easily beat the Indians”) during the inaugural match. Ardent soccer fans genuinely interested in other matches would have been disappointed by the absence of reports.

The match between the Africans and Coloureds was played at Somtseu Road African ground on Saturday 20 July 1946. *Ilanga* noted that this reflected the segregated nature of sport in Durban:

*Kuyobe kudumelene amaKhaladi aseNatali naBantu baseNatali enkundleni yaBantu kudlalelwa iNkomishi entsha ethiwa iGeorge Singh Cup.”*

Natal Coloureds will play Natal Africans at the Africans ground in the new competition called “George Singh Cup”.<sup>208</sup>

Note the emphasis of racial grouping in the above article. “Bantus” and “Coloureds” are emphasised and that the match was going to be held at a soccer pitch of the Africans, that is, Somtseu Africans grounds.

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<sup>207</sup> ‘Ibhola eThekwini’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 13, 1946, 6.

<sup>208</sup> ‘Ibhola eThekwini’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 13, 1946, 6.



The Indians played the Africans on Sunday 18 August 1946 at Curries Fountain. A noticeable feature was the innovative and creative nicknames given to African players.<sup>209</sup> The match was watched by the ‘largest crowd of the season estimated over 5,000’.<sup>210</sup> Both sides attacked from the outset and Nala, the centre forward, Madlala and Nxumalo for the Africans missed scoring opportunities whilst Oliver and Manna’s attempts were saved. After 20 minutes of play, the Africans ‘earned their reward for persistent efforts when Nala took the ball on his own to score an amazing goal, shooting low into the net while running at high speed.’<sup>211</sup> Just before half-time Madlala served Nala who beat Francis, the Indian back, and passed to Mtimkulu who ‘cleverly topped into the net.’<sup>212</sup> Ten minutes into the second half, Manna ‘slammed the ball into the net from close quarters after breaking away from a melee’ to score for Indians; 2-1.<sup>213</sup> R. Pillay equalised with a header before Nala scored the winning goal for the Africans. The final score was 3-2.

After defeating the Indians, the Africans were on equal points with the Coloureds; the “final” between these two teams was played on 15 September 1946 at Curries Fountain.<sup>214</sup> *Ilanga* estimated the crowd at between 8000 and 10000. *The Leader* reported that the match was attended by a ‘mixed crowd of over 8 000 Indians, Africans and Coloureds who paid £350.’<sup>215</sup> *Ilanga* reported that the Coloureds were well-supported and there was a festive atmosphere:

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<sup>209</sup> The 1946 African match-day team comprised of F. Malinga, D. “Seven Days” Masondo (captain), Z. “Fix-wheel” Ngcobo, B. “Pemla” Madlala, O. “Ries” Nazo, H. “Laqhasha” Shongwe, R. “Marabi” Buthelezi, W. “Willie” Nxumalo, F. “Hallelujah” Mtimkhulu, A. “Empress” Khoza, A. “Tube & Tire” Nala and D. “Darkie” Nyawo. According to my informants, the names in quotation marks were nicknames given to the players by supporters in most instances. They usually arose from some characteristic of the player. The Indian team was: E.A. Hansa, Gansen Moodley, C.P. Francis, N.C. Naidoo, Chappie Kisten, M. Chinsamy, S.M. Naidoo, Raleigh Pillay, E. Chinniah, James Oliver and Manna Govender.

<sup>210</sup> ‘Africans Snatch Thrilling 3 – 2 Victory in Last Stages’, *The Leader*, August 21, 1946, 10.

<sup>211</sup> ‘Africans Snatch Thrilling 3 – 2 Victory in Last Stages’, *The Leader*, August 21, 1946, 10.

<sup>212</sup> ‘Africans Snatch Thrilling 3 – 2 Victory in Last Stages’, *The Leader*, August 21, 1946, 10.

<sup>213</sup> ‘Africans Snatch Thrilling 3 – 2 Victory in Last Stages’, *The Leader*, August 21, 1946, 10.

<sup>214</sup> The Africans’ line-up comprised of: F. Masinga, C. Masondo (captain), Z. Ngcobo, B. Madlala, O. Naza, H. Shongwe, G. Mbatha, A. Nala, F. Mtimkhulu, E. Buthelezi and W. Nxumalo. The Coloureds were: E. Yon, E. Richards, Jack Starkey (captain), B. Seale, F. Serge, P. Norkie, A. Woods, B. Richen, A. Eksteen, C. Montgomery and A. Joseph. In an article titled ‘Soccer Highlight’ published by *The Leader* on September 11, 1946, 6 the paper made special mention of Jack Starkey and C. Masondo, the Coloured and African captains respectively. *The Leader* wrote that Starkey, who also plays at right full back, ‘first captained a national Coloured team in the South African Coloured Tournament in 1938’ and had represented Natal in many occasions. C. Masondo, on the other hand, was the ‘captain of the African XI’s in the African Provincial tournaments in 1944 and 1945, and against the Orange Free State and Griqualand West’ early in 1946.

<sup>215</sup> ‘Inter-Race Cup Final. Superb Soccer at Curries’, *The Leader*, September 11, 1946, 6.

*Kuzena besibhuda sakhona amaKhosikazi nezintombi zakhona nezingane, bonke bevathe beconsa, sengathi uKhisimusi.*<sup>216</sup>

There were Coloured women, girls and children all dressed nicely as if it was Christmas.

The referee was of Indian descent. F. “Hallelujah” Mtimkhulu, the Africans’ centre-forward, opened the scoring:

*Kuthe sekungama-25 minutes zibambene u “Hallelujah” isilomosama Olympics F.C., ephaselwangu “Marabi” waliphonsa phakathi! Kwaduma inkundla yonke sengathi sisenkundleni yethu (eMsizini).*<sup>217</sup>

After 25 minutes of play, Hallelujah, the Olympics F.C. star player, scored after receiving a pass from “Marabi”. The fans went berserk as if we were playing in our home ground at Msizini.

Msizini was a migrant worker hostel that accommodated Zulu-speaking men close to the Somtseu ground and was the name given to the Somtseu Ground used by Africans. The teams went into the break with the Africans leading 1-0. The Coloureds came back ‘with renewed vigour’ after the break.<sup>218</sup> “Marabi” was reported to not be in his usual form as he was outplayed by the Coloureds:

*Kwi “right out” u “Succeed” wayedlala ngempela nomsizi wakhe, amahalf evale ukhonkolo o “Laqhash’izenze” no “Ries Concrete” ngingasakhulumi nge “NqolayabaSheshi” no “Seven Days” emumva!*<sup>219</sup>

On the right out “Succeed” was playing well with his partner and the halves in “Laqhash’izenze” and “Ries Concrete” were concrete not to even mention “NqolayabaSheshi” and “Seven Days” at the back.<sup>220</sup>

“Hallelujah” scored early in the second half from a pass from “Marabi” to make the score 2-0. Yon, the Coloureds’ goalkeeper saved numerous shots from Nxumalo and Nala to save the Coloureds from conceding further goals. Some of the language is very descriptive. The Africans’ goalkeeper had a brilliant game; according to *Ilanga*:

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<sup>216</sup> ‘Ibhola eThekwini’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, September 21, 1946, 4.

<sup>217</sup> ‘Ibhola eThekwini’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, September 21, 1946, 4.

<sup>218</sup> ‘Inter-Race Cup Final. Superb Soccer at Curries’, *The Leader*, September 11, 1946, 6.

<sup>219</sup> ‘Ibhola eThekwini’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, September 21, 1946, 4.

<sup>220</sup> ‘Ibhola eThekwini’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, September 21, 1946, 4.

*'lazichoma ezandleni zikaGoli-khipha waBantu owayesebamba ngisho isithunzi salo – wena owaz'inkawu ibamba inkinathi oyiphonsela lona.'*<sup>221</sup>

The goalkeeper was picking every ball like a monkey in a zoo when a nut is thrown at it.

“Hallelujah” completed his hat-trick to make the score 3-0 after a ‘perfect move, among forwards ended in Mtimkhulu scoring with a terrific right foot drive’.<sup>222</sup> The Africans were crowned champions of the inaugural Inter-Race Tournament before NAFA’s President H.M. Molife and secretary, Theo A. Nene.

### **1947: Where are “Seven Days” and “Phemla” and Fix wheel?**

The NISB held its AGM on the last Sunday of April 1947 at Curries Fountain. The meeting unanimously re-elected all the 1946 executive members.<sup>223</sup> In his secretariat report, George Singh, said:

From all points of view the past season, being the first as far as the newly created Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board is concerned has been a most successful one. From the financial aspect, the season has brought to the affiliated associations a fairly substantial amount by way of income. In regard to race co-operation, I can safely say that the different races have been brought together in a really friendly spirit of comradeship, and despite the competitive nature of the matches the sporting spirit prevails through.<sup>224</sup>

Singh added that the 1946 season attracted record crowds and hinted that ‘with the improvement of play we can still improve upon the crowd and gate takings.’<sup>225</sup> While delegates had suggested the formation of a South African Inter-Race Soccer Board in 1946, this did not materialise.

At its 28<sup>th</sup> AGM held at the Ladysmith Government Native High School, the NAFA elected its committee and delegates to SAAFA and NISB. With the exception of Newcastle, representatives of all the other affiliates were present: Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Weenen County, Dannhauser, Ladysmith and Dundee, showing that soccer was played widely throughout Natal. C.W. Nxumalo, J.J. Tenoff, and M.B. Mbatha were the delegates to the

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<sup>221</sup> ‘Ibhola eThekwini’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, September 21, 1946, 4.

<sup>222</sup> ‘Inter-Race Cup Final. Superb Soccer at Curries’, *The Leader*, September 11, 1946, 6.

<sup>223</sup> The NISB officials were Eddie .G. Rooks (president), A.C Maseko (vice-president), George Singh (secretary / treasurer), Wolpert and Abrahams (auditors) and Dr D.D.T. Jabavu (patron).

<sup>224</sup> ‘Racial Co-operation. Soccerites Succeed Where Politicians Fail’, *The Leader*, May 3, 1947, 11.

<sup>225</sup> ‘Racial Co-operation. Soccerites Succeed Where Politicians Fail’, *The Leader*, May 3, 1947, 11

NISB. Molife was re-elected as President of NAFA, with J.J Tenoff as his deputy, and Theo A. Nene as secretary and treasurer. The auditor was M.B. Mbatha, who held a B.A. degree, while the manager of the Natal Africans was C.W. Nxumalo.

Since inter-race matches were popular, the NISB organised a friendly match between the Natal Africans and Coloureds at Curries Fountain on 16 June 1947. After a series of passes, Baxter's pass found Johnson who scored the first goal to make it 1-0 to the Coloureds. Within minutes A. Wood doubled the score. Daba's goal was ruled offside before his second attempt was cleared by Grantham who was reported to be in 'splendid form.'<sup>226</sup> Serge 'slammed the ball into the net' for the Coloureds' third goal when Ntuli, the Africans' "golie", 'fumbled a shot by Dutlow'.<sup>227</sup> The half-time score was 3-0. Three goals were scored in the space of 20 minutes in the second half. Daba reduced the deficit for the Africans but Isaac extended the Coloureds lead to 4-1. Nala then 'found the net with a snap drive' with the final score 4-2 in favour of the Coloureds.

In the first match of the 1947 tournament the Indians played the Coloureds on 30 June before 5 000 spectators. The match was reported to be 'patchy, hardly reaching provincial standard of play' with slight drizzle which made the 'ground heavy and many spectators sought the cover of the grandstand.'<sup>228</sup> Both teams selected their best players.<sup>229</sup> The first goal came through a penalty by Somalingam after a handball in the box, while the second came in a counter-attack in the 25<sup>th</sup> minute:

The Indians forward line got away and Billy Reddy crossed to Somalingam, who put the ball in front of the goalmouth for Dicky Maharaj to cut in on the move and push it past Yon.<sup>230</sup>

N.C. Naidoo then scored to give Indians a 3-0 advantage by half-time. Somalingam scored the fourth goal from a cross from Oliver, who scored the fifth to make it 5-0. Wood scored the Coloureds' consolation goal. The final score was 5-1.

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<sup>226</sup> *The Leader* Correspondent. 'Grantham Excels in Coloured Goals', *The Leader*, June 21, 1947, 10.

<sup>227</sup> *The Leader* Correspondent. 'Grantham Excels in Coloured Goals', *The Leader*, June 21, 1947, 10.

<sup>228</sup> 'Inter-Race Soccer Begins. Indians Avenge Defeat', *The Leader*, July 5, 1947, 10.

<sup>229</sup> Indians: Hansa, A. Jacob, G. Moodley, M. Chinna, Sundram Pillay (captain), N.C. Naidoo, Dickey Maharaj, James Oliver, Billy Reddy, S.M. Chetty & P. Somalingam. Coloureds were: E. Yon, R. Richards, J. Starkey (captain), L. Grantham, E. Mahomet, E. Seale, A. Joseph, L. de Voss, C. Serge, A. Eksteen & A. Woods. Manager: A.J. Abrahams.

<sup>230</sup> 'Inter-Race Soccer Begins. Indians Avenge Defeat', *The Leader*, July 5, 1947, 10.

The Africans played the Coloureds at Somtseu Road on 26 July 1947, refereed by K.R. Padayachee. The Africans won by three goals to one. The Africans and Indians met in the decider for the Singh Trophy at Curries Fountain on Sunday 10 August 1947.<sup>231</sup> The match drew a very large crowd, with one newspaper describing it as ‘a record crowd’ of 5000.<sup>232</sup> The gate takings of £350 were also a new record. The organisers proudly announced this in post-match speeches. The Indians reversed the 1946 result, beating the Africans by three goals to one and being crowned Natal champions for 1947. The Africans led 1-0 at half-time after a goal by Buthelezi. Before the interval the Indians played ‘raggedly, conceding the ball in tackles, and showing little spirit.’<sup>233</sup> Somalingam equalised for the Indians five minutes into the second half before Oliver headed the second goal. It is not clear who scored the third. The game was refereed by Mr. Abrahams from the NCFA.

Following this defeat, there was an avalanche of letters to *Ilanga*, some celebratory and others voicing disappointment. Most writers voiced dissatisfaction with the selection of the African team. The central concern was the non-selection of seasoned campaigners such as captain “Seven Days” and “Phemla”. One fan, C.B. Mtimkulu, who claimed to have attended the match, wrote that Indians’ fans were asking:

*Uphi lo “Seven Days” nalo “Phemla” zonke lo Fix wheel? Thina ayibukile lapha?*<sup>234</sup>

Where are “Seven Days” and “Phemla” and Fix wheel? We are watching nothing here.

The above quotation reflects the manner in which Indians in Durban tend to speak Zulu; this is called *Isifanakalo*. Some African supporters complained that “Hallelujah” was played out of position; in general, the letters demanded an explanation from the NAFA for the poor performance.

### **1948: Africans flatter to deceive**

At the AGM in April 1948, where the secretary and delegates to NISBA and SAAFA presented their reports, the NAFA unanimously elected J.J. Tenoff, E.C. Jali, and C.W.

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<sup>231</sup> Indians: Hansa, A. Jacob, M. Chinsamy, M. Chinna, Sundram Pillay (captain), N.C. Naidoo, Dickey Maharaj, S. Morgas Naidoo, Billy Reddy, S.M. Chetty & P. Somalingam. Manager: V.D. Pillay. The names of the African team were not published but from the match reports the following players played: R. Buthelezi (captain), D. Dladla, H. Shongwe, J. Madondo, H. Zibane, KornetNxumalo, G. Nkumbende, A. Nala & W. Nxumalo. Manager: W.M. Nxumalo.

<sup>232</sup> ‘Indians Secure Inter-Race Trophy: Beat Africans 3 – 1’, *The Leader*, August 16, 1947, 10.

<sup>233</sup> ‘Indians Secure Inter-Race Trophy: Beat Africans 3 – 1’, *The Leader*, August 16, 1947, 10.

<sup>234</sup> ‘NgebholaLangeSonto’, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, August 16, 1947, p. 3.

Nxumalo as delegates to NISBA. In the first match played at Curries Fountain on 14 August 1948, the Coloureds defeated the Africans 2-0. The Coloureds, who came into the match as underdogs, surprised their opponents who had anticipated an easy victory. This was reflected in *Ilanga's* post-match report:

*Kwathi ukuba aziqhathe unompempe umuntu wabona nje ukuthi bayadlula abantu.*<sup>235</sup>

After the referee blew the kick-off whistle one could see that that Africans were going to win.

The Africans' team included three Dundee players A. Sibisi, E. Molife, and F. Skhosana, suggesting that this mining area was a strong soccer area. There was one player from Weenen, J. Ziqubu, while the rest of the team comprised of players from Durban and District.<sup>236</sup>

The Africans won the toss and kicked-off the match with the wind in their favour. Nxumalo and Buthelezi unsuccessfully tested Grantham, the Coloureds' keeper on numerous occasions. The Africans' attacks resulted in six corner kicks of which two were kicked out due to the strong winds. After 'spasmodic attacks', the Coloureds scored their first goal in the 20<sup>th</sup> minute through Wood after Serge dribbled his way through and passed to Lewis who 'successfully tackled Masondo at left back and placed well for Wood', who beat Sibisi, the Africans keeper, from close range.<sup>237</sup> Molife missed a number of opportunities to score, while Joseph, for the Coloureds, was also off-target. Ten minutes before the final whistle, Dutlow scored the second and final goal of the match to give the Coloureds a 2-0 victory.

The Coloureds met the Indians for the second match of the 1948 inter-race season on 5 September at Curries Fountain.<sup>238</sup> It was reported that 'after 5 minutes of play, the Indians

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<sup>235</sup> 'ABantu Behlulwe NgamaKhaladi', *Ilanga laseNatali*, August 21, 1948, 4.

<sup>236</sup> Natal Coloureds team: E. Grantham, L. Grantham, R. Richards (captain), C. Riley, C. Serge, J. Small, G. Lewis, A. Eksteen, A. Wood, C. Dutlow and A. Joseph. Reserves were B. Seale and A. Wilson. The African team for the day were: A. Sibisi, W. Nxumalo, C. Nazo, A. Luthuli, E. Molefe, F. Mtimkhulu (captain), C. Masondo, J. Ziqubu, Ben Madhlala, F. Skosana, BobejaanSpanela and W. Mcoyi. Manager: Z. Ngcobo.

<sup>237</sup> 'Natal Inter-Race Soccer Begins. Africans Beaten 2 - 0 by Coloureds', *The Leader*, August 21, 1948, 10.

<sup>238</sup> Coloureds retained the same line-up for the match: E. Grantham, L. Grantham, R. Richards (captain), C. Riley, C. Serge, J. Small, G. Lewis, A. Eksteen, A. Wood, E. Dutlow and A. Joseph. Reserves were B. Seale and A. Wilson. The Indian team comprised of: V.C. Moodley, Juggie Naidoo as goalkeepers. Backs: S.M. "Danger" Chetty, N.C. Naidoo and Mannie Naidoo. Forwards: Jackie Maharaj, P. "Kondiah" Sumalingam (captain), Billy Reddy, R. "Lightie" Chinniah, James Oliver, Bootie Singh, Kista Govender and S. "Crash" Morgan. The manager was P. Chitai. Note the nicknames in brackets provided by *The Leader*, September 4, 1948, 10

changed into red jerseys owing to the clash of colours'.<sup>239</sup> Indians opened the scoring through Bootie Singh who shot from 30yards. The Coloureds were awarded a penalty which Joseph "ballooned" over the bar. At the other end, however, Kondiah converted a penalty for the Indians' second goal; 2-0. Wood reduced the Coloureds' deficit in the 25<sup>th</sup> minute. With 10 minutes to play Kista Govender scored the third goal from a cross from Kondiah which 'caused a scrimmage in front of the Coloured area.'<sup>240</sup> Chinniah cinched the match when he scored the fourth goal; final score 4-0 to the Indians.

The final match took place at Curries Fountain on 3 October between the Indians and Africans.<sup>241</sup> It was watched by an estimated 7500 spectators, netting approximately £452.<sup>242</sup> Within half an hour, the score was 5-1 in favour of the Indians and there was little interest as 'the large crowd began moving out'.<sup>243</sup> Bootie opened the scoring in the first minute and Oliver made it 2-0 in the 10<sup>th</sup> minute before Bootie completed his brace in the 35<sup>th</sup> minute to bring the score to 3-0.<sup>244</sup> Two minutes after half-time N.C. Naidoo handled the ball in the 'fatal area' but the Africans missed the kick. The referee ordered the penalty to be re-taken as the keeper had moved before the ball was kicked but it was again shot over the bar.<sup>245</sup> Kondiah scored the fourth goal and A. Luthuli scored a consolation goal for the Africans. Chinniah then scored the Indians' fifth goal. One other goal by a player whose name was not reported by either *Ilanga* or *The Leader* made the final score 6-1. E.G. Rooks, president of the NISB, presented the trophy to the Indians' captain, Somalingam.

An analysis of reported gate takings from 1946 to 1948 shows that inter-race matches were lucrative:

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<sup>239</sup> 'Coloureds Beaten By Indians', *The Leader*, September 11, 1948, 10.

<sup>240</sup> 'Coloureds Beaten By Indians', *The Leader*, September 11, 1948, 10.

<sup>241</sup> Line-up for Indians: V.C. Moodley, Juggie Naidoo as goalkeepers. Backs: S.M. "Danger" Chetty, Rueben Pillay of Maritzburg and N.C. Naidoo. Halves: M. Chinsamy, "Triggey" Pillay and S. Madray Chetty. Forwards: Jackie Maharaj of Maritzburg, P. "Kondiah" Sumalingam (captain), Billy Reddy, R. "Lightie" Chinniah, James Oliver, Bootie Singh, Kista Govender of Ladysmith and S. "Crash" Morgan. R. Bijon replaced Chitai as the manager. The African team was: R. Buthelezi. Backs: W. Nxumalo, C. Nazo and A. Luthuli. Halves: E. Molefe from Dundee, F. Mtimkhulu (captain) and B. Madhlala. Forwards: C. Masondo, Z. Ngcobo, A. Sibezi from Estcourt, F. Skosana and Olympic Bob. Manager: W.C. Nxumalo replacing Z. Ngcobo.

<sup>242</sup> 'Africans beaten 6 - 1', *The Leader*, October 9, 1948, 10.

<sup>243</sup> 'Africans beaten 6 - 1', *The Leader*, October 9, 1948, 10.

<sup>244</sup> 'Africans beaten 6 - 1', *The Leader*, October 9, 1948, 10.

<sup>245</sup> 'Africans beaten 6 - 1', *The Leader*, October 9, 1948, 10.

**TABLE 1: Gate Takings, 1946-1948**

	1946	1947	1948
Indo/Col	£162	£245	£246
Col/Afr	£236 (replay £347)	£117	£163
Indo/Afr	£238	£353	£432
Ntl / Tvl		£696	

**Source:** *The Leader*, 9 October 1948, p. 10.

### 1949 Afro-Indian riots

The African-Indian riots in Durban in January 1949 resulted in the NISB cancelling the tournament that year. At the 1950 NISB meeting George Singh, the secretary, explained why the tournament was cancelled:

The annual report for season 1949 must be necessarily brief owing to the unfortunate racial riots that occurred during January 1949 and owing to a certain amount of tension that existed, it was generally felt that Inter-race soccer matches should not be held for the 1949 season.<sup>246</sup>

The riots from 13 to 15 January 1949 have a large historiography and the details will not be repeated here. The problems started on Thursday 13 January 1949 when an Indian man assaulted an African boy. The riots spread from the city centre to the outlying suburbs with the worst violence being recorded in Cato Manor. By the time the rioting ended, the official loss of life and property was as follows: deaths: 142 (87 Africans, 50 Indians, one white and four others whose identity could not be determined); injured: 1087 (541 Africans, 503 Indians, 11 Coloureds and 32 whites; of the injured 58 died); buildings destroyed: one factory, 58 stores, and 247 dwellings; buildings damaged: two factories, 652 stores, and 1285 dwellings.

While activists suggested a conspiracy on the part of whites to get Africans to attack Indians, this ignores the underlying grievances and the distrust that existed between Indians and Africans. This was in part because many of the newly urbanised Africans were tenants of Indian landlords, shopped at Indian stores, patronised Indian buses, and competed with them for urban housing. The sentiments expressed in *Ilanga* demonstrate the depth of African

<sup>246</sup> 'Inter-Race Soccer Board', *The Leader*, May 20, 1950, 14.



anger. The newspaper defended the riots and blamed Indians for the violence, stating that ‘the whole grim business was logical, simply inevitable.’ *Ilanga* attributed the riots to ‘black-marketeering’ by Indians; Indians’ opposition to Africans’ economic progress; ‘shacketeering’ by Indian landlords; the state’s preferential policies towards Indians; and Indian feelings ‘of snobbishness and superiority over the Africans’.<sup>247</sup>

With thousands of Indians left homeless and living in camps, and leaders working hard to mend relations, the NISB did not hold a conference in 1949, partly out of respect for those who had suffered and partly out of fear that simmering tensions may boil over into another confrontation.

### **1950: Business as usual**

The 1950 NAFA AGM in Ladysmith elected J.M. Kambule (President) of Durban, C.D. Mdhladla (vice-President) of Ladysmith, H.M. Molife (secretary / treasurer) of Dundee and O.A. Nkwanyana (deputy secretary) of Durban as executives and J.J. Tenoff, I.J. Motholo and P.O. Sikhakhane to the NISB.<sup>248</sup> The NISB held its AGM on 15 May. The executive that had held office since 1946 was re-elected. Others present at the meeting included S.L. Singh, P. Chitai and B.A. Maharaj for NIFA; B. Lucioli and A.J. Abrahams for NCFA; and I.J. Motholo, J.J. Tenoff and P.O. Sikhakhane represented NAFA. A letter from the Transvaal Inter-Race Soccer Board requesting an inter-provincial inter-race match similar to the one held in 1947 was discussed and the meeting agreed that the officials should make the ‘necessary arrangements for the match to be played’.<sup>249</sup> In his annual report, George Singh observed that the cancellation of fixtures in 1949 had left a hole in the soccer calendar:

It is gratifying that letters were received from various sources expressing the wish that Inter-race matches would be continued at the earliest opportunity. It is hoped that this Board will go all out during the season 1950 to repeat its successes and to encourage co-operation between the different races concerned for the good of all ... The general standard of play of non-European soccer was still not very high, but improvement could be made if the affiliated units adopted the system of enlisting the services of coaches.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Ranji Nowbath, ‘Causes of the convulsion,’ *The Forum*, 29 January 1949, accessed on 30 August 2013, <http://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/70-durban-riots-1949>.

<sup>248</sup> ‘Natal African Football Association’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, May 20, 1950, 4.

<sup>249</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer Board’, *The Leader*, May 20, 1950, 14.

<sup>250</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer Board’, *The Leader*, May 20, 1950, 14.

The first inter-race match for 1950 was played between the Africans and Coloureds on 16 July at Curries Fountain.<sup>251</sup> *The Leader* provided a succinct history of the tournament to date:

In the first year of the tournament the Africans won when they scored convincing wins over the Indians and Coloureds. The Indians came at the bottom of the log when they lost their matches. In the following year however, the trophy changed hands when the Indians won both their matches to annex the trophy. In the 1948 tournament a record crowd, estimated at about 7,500 paid approximately £432 to see the Natal Indian XI, holders of the Singh Trophy, retain it for the second year when they soundly defeated the Natal African side by a margin of 6 – 1 in the final.<sup>252</sup>

The Coloureds proved too strong for the Africans, beating them 5-3; their second win over the Africans since the inauguration of the tournament. The Africans, described as ‘comparatively heavier than their opponents’, got behind when Christian shot from 20 yards out: 1-0. In the 20<sup>th</sup> minute, Christian again ‘made a solo effort and beat Kumalo from close quarters’ to double the Coloureds’ lead.<sup>253</sup> In the first minute of the second half the Africans were awarded a penalty which was converted by Mabaso: 2-1. Within minutes, the Africans equalised with Mtimkhulu’s ‘rasping drive from the 25 yards range’ leaving McAllister, the Coloureds’ keeper, helpless.<sup>254</sup> A minute later, Mabaso put the Africans in front with a header: 3-2. In the 20<sup>th</sup> minute of the second half Eksteen headed the third goal for the Coloureds: 3-3. The last 15 minutes saw two quick goals from Davis and Thompson, making the final score 5-3 in favour of the Coloureds.

On July 29 the Indians locked horns with the Coloureds.<sup>255</sup> The NCFAs were torn by infighting between the Durban and Maritzburg associations and for the second time in the

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<sup>251</sup> Africans: W. Dimba, C. Masondo, A. Makanya, P. Pieters, C. Khumalo, I. Mabaso, F. Mtimkhulu, H. Bhana, R. Thalgadi, V. Makathini, W. Ndimande, E. Molife, H. Shongwe, S. Kumalo, E. Zondi & E. Madhlala. The NCFAs did not release the Coloureds’ line-up to the newspapers. *The Leader* (July 22, 1950, 10) noted that, ‘it is understood that there was some hitch in regard to the selection of the team with the Maritzburg officials’; hence such ‘well-known players such as Dutlow and Woods did not make appearance’ in this match. The Coloured team was not representative of Natal as it featured only Durban players who were picked at the last minute. This ‘hitch’ is discussed in more detail below. ‘In the name of sport, it is hoped that the Coloured Association will settle their dispute as soon as possible’, *The Leader* appealed. However, in a preview of the Indians-Coloureds match, *The Leader* named the Coloured team which played the Africans as follows: J. McAllister, R. Richard (captain), J. Niekerk, L. Riley, G. Montgomery, B. Seale, A. Thompson, D. Christians, A. Eksteen, D. Davis and F. Major. The manager was A.G. Montgomery.

<sup>252</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer Series Begin Tomorrow’, *The Leader*, July 15, 1950, 10.

<sup>253</sup> ‘Africans Defeated 5 – 3 By Coloureds’, *The Leader*, July 22, 1950, 10.

<sup>254</sup> ‘Africans Defeated 5 – 3 By Coloureds’, *The Leader*, July 22, 1950, 10.

<sup>255</sup> Natal selectors, R. Loganatham, R. Bijon and S.B. David selected the following Indian team: P.M. “Spider” Pillay of South Coast, V.C. Moodley (Durban), K. Mariemuthoo (Durban), Reuben Pillay (captain) of

tournament, the Durban team represented Natal.<sup>256</sup> The dispute between the two associations was serious and in 1951 the Coloureds failed to submit their match-day squads to newspapers prior to the inter-race series. The reason for the dispute was unclear until March 1952 when *The Leader* investigated the “hitch”. In early February, an unnamed NCFA official reportedly wrote to the Maritzburg Coloured FA (MCFA) ‘suggesting a round-table conference between the two centres to iron out their differences.’ The MCFA agreed that the meeting be held in Pietermaritzburg at the end of March 1952 but nothing materialised.<sup>257</sup> The MCFA had withdrawn its membership from the NCFA in 1950. Woods, president of the MCFA, was quoted as saying that their ‘withdrawal will not affect their membership of the Maritzburg Inter-Race Soccer Board but would certainly affect Durban as the Natal Coloured Association, to all intents and purposes, does not exist.’<sup>258</sup> This led to Durban players representing “Natal” in the 1951 inter-race matches. The MCFA took their case to SACFA who ‘enjoined them to remain within the fold’ of NCFA.<sup>259</sup> The MCFA argued that Durban was not Natal and the NCFA could not exist with just one affiliate. In May 1952, Woods emphasised that:

The Natal Coloureds (Football) Association ceased to exist when we withdrew, for it is composed on only two units, Durban and Maritzburg, and since we have withdrawn Durban alone cannot possibly style itself for Natal.<sup>260</sup>

The Maritzburg Inter-Race Soccer Board (MIRSB) had been founded in 1947. It was sponsored by the Maritzburg Indian Football Association (MIFA) with Coloured, African and County Associations participating. The Bantu Association joined in 1950. The MIRSB staged inter-race games in Pietermaritzburg from 1947 and was ‘successful both financially and in bringing about racial improvement in race relationship.’<sup>261</sup> Matches were not staged in 1949 because of the race riots. The MIRSB, whose chairman was Woods, was not affiliated to the NISB. Unlike MICFA, ‘officials of the Maritzburg and the County Indian Associations, while being non-committal, felt that the absence of the Coloureds need not prevent’ the NISB from

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Pietermaritzburg, Manni Naidoo (vice-captain) of South Coast, T. Rampath (Pietermaritzburg), R. “Lightie” Chinniah, James Oliver (Durban), Billy Reddy (County), “Kondiah” Somalingam (Durban), GopalMaistry (Northern Districts), A.M. Govender (South Coast), S. Marie (Weenen County), P. “Scores” Naidoo (Durban) and Sundray Pillay (Pietermaritzburg).

<sup>256</sup> ‘Indo-Coloureds Match’, *The Leader*, July 29, 1950, 11.

<sup>257</sup> ‘Split in Natal Coloured Soccer’, *The Leader*, March 28, 1952, 11.

<sup>258</sup> ‘Split in Natal Coloured Soccer’, *The Leader*, March 28, 1952, 11.

<sup>259</sup> ‘Maritzburg Coloureds Drops Out of Board’, *The Leader*, May 9, 1952, 11.

<sup>260</sup> ‘Maritzburg Coloureds Drops Out of Board’, *The Leader*, May 9, 1952, 11.

<sup>261</sup> ‘Maritzburg Coloureds Drops Out of Board’, *The Leader*, May 9, 1952, 11.

continuing to function.<sup>262</sup> The rift was healed at a meeting in Durban from 23-24 May 1952 when SASF and SACFA arbitrated the dispute. B.A. Maharaj, one of the arbitrators, told *The Leader* reporter that the MCFA had rejoined the NCFA.<sup>263</sup> Pietermaritzburg Coloured players were again available for Natal inter-race matches. The newspapers did not get to the bottom of the conflict and without proper records or officials from that era to interview it is not possible to reconstruct exactly what happened. However, this conflict illustrates the danger of falling into the trap of regarding “Black” and “white” as homogenous racial categories. There were many lines of division amongst people, race being only one, and these played themselves out in various ways.

Returning to the second match of 1950, the Indo-Coloured encounter was watched by around 5 000 spectators and raised £270.<sup>264</sup> The referee, H.P. Shongwe, not only handled the game well, but ‘stole the show’ with his ‘inimitable style’ of refereeing to the extent that he was applauded ‘when going on to the field and when coming out’.<sup>265</sup> Gopal Maistry, of Northern Districts, who was reported to be wearing ‘his white boots’ was identified as the Indians’ side weakest link as he ‘did not appear to combine well with his forwards’ due to the “obvious” reason that his method of play in hard grounds in northern Natal was ‘different from that’ of local, Durban, players.<sup>266</sup> The match was scoreless until the 60<sup>th</sup> minute. *The Leader* summarised the match as follows: ‘After a goalless first half, the Indians netted two quick goals to take the lead. The Coloureds scored their only goal on the 13<sup>th</sup> minute in the second half. Rampath, the young Maritzburg right wing, who played a fine game, scored the first goal and assisted Kondiah in scoring the second.’<sup>267</sup>

The last match of the tournament, between the Indians and Africans, was played on 13 August and attracted a crowd of ‘7,000 people who paid £350’.<sup>268</sup> It ended in a 1-1 draw and the Indians clinched the Singh Trophy for the third successive time.<sup>269</sup> The ‘diminutive’ Titty Govender opened the score for the Indians before Ndimande equalised for the Africans. The

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<sup>262</sup> ‘Maritzburg Coloureds Drops Out of Board’, *The Leader*, May 9, 1952, 11.

<sup>263</sup> ‘Coloureds Rejoin Soccer Fold’, *The Leader*, May 30, 1952, 11.

<sup>264</sup> ‘Rampath Paves Way For Natal Indians’ Win’, *The Leader*, August 6, 1950, 10.

<sup>265</sup> ‘Rampath Paves Way For Natal Indians’ Win’, *The Leader*, August 6, 1950, 10.

<sup>266</sup> ‘Rampath Paves Way For Natal Indians’ Win’, *The Leader*, August 6, 1950, 10.

<sup>267</sup> ‘Rampath Paves Way For Natal Indians’ Win’, *The Leader*, August 6, 1950, 10.

<sup>268</sup> ‘Natal Indians Win for Third Successive Year’, *The Leader*, August 19, 1950, 14.

<sup>269</sup> Natal Indians: B. Masinga, W. Mcoyi, S. Mtembu, G. Mbatha, C. Masondo (captain), A. Mabaso, H. Zibane, W. Ndimande, A. Nzimande, R. Talgodi and L. Zwane. The Indians’ team comprised of: V.C. Moodley, Reuben Pillay (captain), K. Mariemuthoo, Manni Naidoo, M. Chinsamy, V. Sundram Pillay, T. Rampath, James Oliver, LightieChiniiah, Nikki Pillay and Titty Govender.

Coloureds were watching eagerly as they had gained two points by beating the Africans. The match was officiated by Potter, a White official and during the pre-match festivities both teams were introduced to the African American (“Negro” as the paper described them) actors Canada Lee and Charles McRae, together with Lionel Nkunkwane of Johannesburg who were in South Africa acting in Alan Paton’s *Cry the Beloved Country*.<sup>270</sup> Councillor Farrel of Durban and Captain Keyselringh of the South African Police were also introduced before the start of the match. Counsellor Farrel presented the Singh Trophy to Reuben Pillay, the Indians’ captain.

One of the complaints in letters to the newspapers at this time was a lack of professionalism in soccer in terms of administration, refereeing, and players. It was stated that coaches reported late to matches, while referees came under heavy criticism. In a column in *Ilanga*, “Rolling Stone” wrote that apart from the fact that some referees got “lost” before their matches began and had to be “hunted” by loudspeakers, there ‘seems to be any amount of “rough-house” indulged in matches.’<sup>271</sup> The other ‘problem’, continued Rolling Stone, was that referees were scared to report misconduct by players and fans. Officials, too, dared not issue statements on match-day ‘fights for the interest of the public who wanted to know about these incidents.’ Rolling Stone suggested that the DDFA amend its constitution to allow it to deal with referees’ conduct and players and clubs’ tendency to fight with referees, in order to avoid the “slaughter” of referees.<sup>272</sup>

### **1951: The year Africans ‘snatched everything’**

The NISB held its AGM at Curries Fountain in the last week of April, 1951. The executive, elected in 1946, changed for the first time. Co-founder, Chief Luthuli was elected patron. The executive comprised of W.C. Nxumalo (president), A.J. Abrahams (vice president), George Singh (secretary & treasurer), and Wolpert and Abrahams (auditors).<sup>273</sup> The NAFA’s three-man team to the NISB was J.J. Tenoff, I.J. Matholo, and P.O. Sikakane, who held a B.A. degree, pointing to the important role that the educated elites played in promoting soccer. The 1951 tournament got off to a flying start when the defending champions, Indians and Africans played a thrilling match that ended in a 3-2 victory for the latter on 8 July. Indians’

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<sup>270</sup>*Cry the Beloved Country* was filmed by Zoltan Korda at Ixopo, South Natal. *The Leader* wrote: ‘Actors were brought to the grounds by Ashwin Chondree who met them during his stay in America while attending sessions of the United Nations at Lake Success.’

<sup>271</sup> ‘Rolling Stone on our Soccer’, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, December 9, 1950, p.15.

<sup>272</sup> ‘Rolling Stone on our Soccer’, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, December 9, 1950, p.15.

<sup>273</sup> ‘Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board Officials’, *The Leader*, May 4, 1951, 10.

selectors R. Bijon, M. Naidoo and R. Loganatham reportedly ‘caused some surprise in their team to play the Africans’ by introducing a number of “new” faces.<sup>274</sup> The match was watched by 9000 people who paid a total of £430.<sup>275</sup> Pillay scored the Indians’ first goal in the 25<sup>th</sup> minute and doubled their lead from a Rampath corner shortly thereafter. The second half ‘saw the reversal of fortunes in favour of the Africans.’ Within a minute, Mdhlalose beat “Jar”, the Indians’ keeper, ‘with a stinging low drive.’<sup>276</sup> Shongwe equalised for the Africans in the 20<sup>th</sup> minute. With ten minutes to go “Jar” was rushed to hospital with an arm injury. K. Mariemuthoo, an out-field player, deputised in goal. This handicapped the Indians and the Africans, through Shongwe, scored the winning goal.<sup>277</sup>

The Indians met the Coloureds in the second match on 17 August. For the first time in its history, the NISB introduced an under-18 curtain raiser between young Indians and Coloureds. The Africans had no junior team. In the senior match the two teams took to the field ‘with almost the same colour all-green jerseys and white knockers.’ The Indians were forced to leave the field and change their kit to avoid confusion.<sup>278</sup> They scored first through “Kondiah” in the 15<sup>th</sup> minute and Bob Pillay extended the lead five minutes later: 2-0. The Coloureds were awarded a penalty and ‘their inside left’ scored, but when Eddie Khan was injured the Coloureds capitalised on their extra man to equalise through ‘their centre forward’. Names were not provided.<sup>279</sup> In the second half, a goal by the Coloureds was disallowed before ‘their inside left’ scored the third goal. Within minutes, Rampath equalised with what was referred to as the ‘best goal of the match’ when he ‘cut in beautifully after beating two men, and sent home a terrific shot’.<sup>280</sup> The determined Coloureds team scored a fourth goal when ‘their inside right scored from close in’ before Massey Pillay again equalised to make the final score 4-4.<sup>281</sup> The Indians’ fifth goal was disallowed. *The Leader’s* post-match report stated that the referee lowered the tempo of the game through his ‘whistling concerto’. ‘It has been thought that African referees compare favourable with

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<sup>274</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer Begins on Sunday’, *The Leader*, July 6, 1951, 10. The Indian team comprised of: V.C. Moodley and “Jar” Naidoo. Halves and full-backs: K. Mariemuthoo, Manni Naidoo, “Titty” Govender, Sookraj Mohan (Northern Districts), Eddie Khan, S. Madray and Sundram Pillay (Maritzburg), Forwards: T. Rampath, S. Vandayar, Bob Pillay, “Lightie” Chinniah, KondiaSomalingam and Massie Pillay. The manager was R. Bijon, who was also a selector. The African team was; E. Mthembu, C. Masondo (captain), T. Zondi, H.E. Zondi, H. Shongwe, A. Mabaso, H. Zubane, P. Mbuli, W. Mdhlalose, V. Makathini and D. Thabethe.

<sup>275</sup> ‘Natal Indian XI – Holders of Singh Trophy- Beaten by 3 - 2’, *The Leader*, July 6, 1951, 10.

<sup>276</sup> ‘Natal Indian XI – Holders of Singh Trophy- Beaten by 3 - 2’, *The Leader*, July 6, 1951, 10.

<sup>277</sup> ‘Natal Indian XI – Holders of Singh Trophy- Beaten by 3 - 2’, *The Leader*, July 6, 1951, 10.

<sup>278</sup> ‘Indians Fall Out of Natal Inter-Race Series’, *The Leader*, August 17, 1951, 10.

<sup>279</sup> ‘Indians Fall Out of Natal Inter-Race Series’, *The Leader*, August 17, 1951, 10.

<sup>280</sup> ‘Indians Fall Out of Natal Inter-Race Series’, *The Leader*, August 17, 1951, 10.

<sup>281</sup> ‘Indians Fall Out of Natal Inter-Race Series’, *The Leader*, August 17, 1951, 10.

those of other races' because their "showmanship" has always been popular with the fans but the referee in this match 'left much to be desired'.<sup>282</sup>

The final match was played between the Coloureds and Africans at Curries Fountain on 9 September. A win for the Coloureds would have secured them the Singh Trophy whilst a draw for the Africans would have been enough to clinch them the title. As was its practice, *Ilanga* only published the Africans' starting line-up.<sup>283</sup> Zeph Dlhomo took over the management of the Natal team in 1950 when the team played in Bloemfontein, due to C.W. Nxumalo falling ill. The Natal Africans won the SAAFA national Cup in 1950 and topped it with the Singh Trophy in 1951. It was a great year for Africans' team, as Dhlomo boasted:

*Ngalonyaka thinaNatali ngobulala konke.*<sup>284</sup>

This year Natal snatches everything.

Dhlomo was elated by the victory and in a rare column-cum-letter to *Ilanga* he provided a brief history of the cup. The win clearly meant a lot to him.

*Kulenkomishi esiyidlalela namaKhaladi namaNdiya eNatal ... siyithathile ngaye u1951 lo. LeNkomishi eyanikelwangu Mn. G. Singh iqale ukudlalelwa ngo1946. Ngo 1946 abantu, 1947 amaNdiya; 1948 amaNdiya; 1949 ayidlalelangwa ngenxa yesibhelu eThekwini; 1950 amaNdiya; 1951 abantu.*<sup>285</sup>

In this Cup, where we compete against Coloureds and Indians in Natal, we took it in 1951. This Cup, which was donated by Mr. G. Singh, started in 1946. In 1946 it was won by Africans, 1947 Indians; 1948 Indians; it was not held in 1949 due to riots in Durban, 1950 Indians; 1951 Africans.

Luthuli handed the Singh Trophy to the Africans' captain after their victory over the Coloureds by three goals to nil in the final. Amongst those present at the match was Professor D.D.T. Jabavu. Surprisingly, given the significance of the victory, the match was given little coverage in *Ilanga*. A headline merely read:

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<sup>282</sup> 'Indians Fall Out of Natal Inter-Race Series', *The Leader*, August 17, 1951, 10.

<sup>283</sup> The starting line-up was sent to the paper by NAFA'S secretary, H.M. Molefe. The team managed, by Zeph Dlhomo, featured E. Mthembu of Pietermaritzburg and H. Shongwe of Dundee and D & D players T. Zondi, A. Mabaso, A. Nzimande, E. Fakazi, V. Makatini, W. Mdlalose, I. Mabaso, C. Zwane, H. Zubane, A. Ndimande and P. Zulu.

<sup>284</sup> Zeph Dlhomo. 'Ezebhola eNatali', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, December 1, 1951, p.7.

<sup>285</sup> ZephDlhomo. 'Ezebhola eNatali', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, December 1, 1951, p.7.

*Umdlalo Ogculisayo Webhola eThekwini: ehlulwa amaKhaladi*<sup>286</sup>

A satisfactory match in Durban: Coloureds beaten.

However, *The Leader* stated in its report that Zwane scored the first goal 15 minutes before Dutlow's goal was disallowed. Just before half-time, Makathini scored the Africans' second goal and shortly thereafter Dutlow suffered an injury 'to his right arm and had to be carried off the field.'<sup>287</sup> A third goal was scored by an unreported player. *The Leader* stated that the Africans 'were full of vigour for their win. They outmanned and outplayed their opposition particularly in the second half as the Coloureds lacked positional play'.<sup>288</sup>

### **The South African Soccer Federation (SASF): from provincial to national unity**

Around the time of the 1951 tournament, an important milestone was reached in the annals of non-racial soccer in South Africa when the SA African Football Association (SAAFA), SA Coloured Football Association (SACFA) and SA Indian Football Association (SAIFA) formed the South African Soccer Federation (SASF) to further the interests of non-racial football in a context in which the grip of apartheid was tightening. Around 46000 members of these three national associations affiliated to the SASF whose constitution did not bar anyone from membership on the basis on race, class, gender, ethnicity, or language. Durban had long been the epicentre of South African soccer; this was demonstrated by the number of Natal role players amongst the SASF's officials.<sup>289</sup> Magubane notes that the SASF was 'formed to coordinate the work of the provincial boards and to seek international recognition' from FIFA. SASF also organised 'matches among its affiliates for the £500 Kajee Trophy', where "national teams" 'organised along racial lines competed for the trophy'.<sup>290</sup>

The origins of the SASF date to 1948 when A.J. Albertyn, vice-president of the SACFA travelled from Cape Town to meet with African SAAFA officials in Johannesburg. A friendly match between Africans and Coloureds, won by the latter, was well received by the public.

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<sup>286</sup> 'Umdlalo Ogculisayo Webhola eThekwini: Ehlulwa AmaKhaladi', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, September 15, 1951, p. 6.

<sup>287</sup> 'Natal Africans Win Singh Trophy: Coloureds Beaten 3 - 0', *The Leader*, September 14, 1951, 11.

<sup>288</sup> 'Natal Africans Win Singh Trophy: Coloureds Beaten 3 - 0', *The Leader*, September 14, 1951, 11.

<sup>289</sup> The executive of SASF in 1951-52 was M. John (SAIFA), J.H. Alves (SACFA), E.C. Jali (SAAFA), George Singh (Hon. Sec.), Albert Christopher (vice-president), E.G. Rooks (vice-president), S.L. Singh (president), R.V. Ngcobo (vice-president), and A. Harry Naidoo (Hon. Treasurer). In R. Lutchman, *South African Soccer Federation. Souvenir Brochure* (Durban: Mercantile Printers, 1951), 9. John, Singh, Christopher, Rooks, George Singh, and A.H. Naidoo were from Natal.

<sup>290</sup> Magubane, "Sports and politics," 79.



Indians were not involved in these discussions as the SAIFA had not formulated a position on unity. Indians were also absent from a follow-up meeting in Cape Town in May 1950 where a decision was taken to form a federation and D.R. Twala, also a member of the ANC Youth League, was appointed pro-tem president and A.J. Albertyn pro-tem secretary. A rematch was again won by the Coloureds. Following this meeting, Albertyn and Twala made overtures to Indian officials who agreed to participate in the proposed federation and a meeting was held in Johannesburg in March 1951 to discuss the way forward.<sup>291</sup> Agreement was reached in principle and the federation was formalized at a meeting in Durban in September 1951 when the first executive was elected.<sup>292</sup> The Bantu Football Association, with 20000 members across the country, refused to join the SASF.<sup>293</sup> This pointed to deeply entrenched notions of race and the difficulty of breaking down these barriers.

S. “Bobby” Harrypersadh, sports editor of *The Leader*, expressed the hope that unity might lead to international participation and that ‘we shall then be able to show the world what equality of opportunity – as ably demonstrated by the sporting achievements of the West Indies and the U.S. Negroes at the Olympics – can produce.’<sup>294</sup> In extending his congratulations to the Federation, the Reverend Bernard Sigamoney delivered a powerful message on the power of sport:

The Federation goes a long way in bringing together the three non-European races. The ultimate ideal of sport is that there should be no racial discrimination whatever. There should be one organization in respect of each branch of sport in which all races play together. Men like Joe Louis, Jessie Owens, Duleep Singh, Jack Johnson and many others, all rose to heights of glory because of this. That day will yet dawn in South Africa. Despite obstacles from outside as well as within, the gap (as races) will become narrower and narrower. The foundations of the Federation have nevertheless been truly and well laid, from which will rise a new and glorious edifice of sport in Africa which will break down all race barriers. The old ways will give place to the new ways of sport. That should be the ultimate goal of all of us. For, all mankind essentially belongs to one race. We have one

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<sup>291</sup> S.L. Singh, Reverend B. Sigamoney, William Ernest, Bob Pavadai represented Indians; H.C. Maggott, H.J. Lamb, J.A. Van Harte, and J. Barnard represented Coloureds; and F.J. Moidibedi, H.H. Zibi, and L.C. Koza represented Africans. Twala and Albertyn attended in their capacity as president and vice-president, respectively. S.L. Singh, “Federation and its Future,” in R. Lutchman, *SASF. Souvenir Brochure*, 13.

<sup>292</sup> S.L. Singh, “Federation and its Future,” in R. Lutchman, *SASF. Souvenir Brochure*, 11-15.

<sup>293</sup> P. Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer Politics and Society in South Africa*, (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2004), 107.

<sup>294</sup> In R. Lutchman, *SASF. Souvenir Brochure*, 23.

common heritage, common ties, and one common brotherhood. If we can work towards this ideal, then our grounds will be hallowed anvils on which the future of an African Federation of sport will be hammered out in a common brotherhood. The Federation has a wonderful future, and if it is to consolidate its position and be the means by which the greatest measure of unity can be achieved, its members must not be parochial in their outlook. They must at all times take the long view and work for all Africa. The trumpet of sport must sound throughout our cities, villages, and dorps, until sportsmen wend their way to harmonizing of all races to one common brotherhood, and there shall rise up to Heaven from the mortals of earth a loud Amen!<sup>295</sup>

Reverend Sigamoney reflected the Pan-Africanist sentiments of the time. The formation of the SASF meant that there were now two national soccer bodies in the country; the other was the Football Association of South Africa (FASA). Magubane reminds us that SASF had no racial barriers while FASA, which was affiliated to FIFA, the world football body, restricted its membership to whites.

These changes took place in a broader context of movement towards political unity. The 1940s saw members of the ANC Youth League, such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and Oliver Tambo, assume positions of power within the ANC. They were elected to its National Executive in 1949 and helped revitalise the organisation. Some members of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), such as J.B. Marks and Moses Kotane, also exerted influence on the organisation. In 1949 the ANC adopted a Programme of Action to achieve freedom from white minority rule. Together with the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress, and the (white) Congress of Democrats, they embarked on a number of joint campaigns in the 1950s.<sup>296</sup>

From 1953, the SASF organised a biennial national tournament for the A.I. Kajee Trophy, where the three national soccer bodies selected "racial" national teams to play against one another. These matches were enormously popular, with record spectator crowds. Alegi notes that in the early 1950s, soccer matches in Durban and Johannesburg attracted crowds that grew from between 5000 and 10000 at the beginning of the decade to between 20000 and

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<sup>295</sup> Rev. B.L.E. Sigamoney, 'Colour Bar and Sport,' In R. Lutchman, *SASF. Souvenir Brochure*, 37.

<sup>296</sup> Douglas Booth. *The Race Game. Sport and Politics in South Africa* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 73-74.

25000 spectators by the end.<sup>297</sup> Magubane adds that the matches organised under the auspices of SASF ‘heightened the interest of administrators and fired them with a desire to explore further fields.’ Magubane was referring to the attempts to gain international recognition for the SASF as well, in subsequent years, an attempt to remove ‘race’ from SASF competitions and matches which were organized nationally rather than on a provincial basis. He notes that this would ‘obviate any colour feeling that racially organised matches’ caused among soccer followers.<sup>298</sup> This would take a decade to achieve.

The following chapter examines the tournament from 1952 to 1965 during which two key political events occurred; the Defiance Campaign of 1952 and the arrest of 156 activists in 1956 which set the five-year long Treason Trial in motion.

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<sup>297</sup> Alegi. *Laduma!*, 88.

<sup>298</sup> Magubane, “Sport and Politics,” 79.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Indian Ascendancy, 1952-1954**

The federal soccer structure was well and truly entrenched by 1952. The sport enjoyed widespread popularity amongst urban Africans. This was also the period of intensified efforts to enforce racial segregation by means of the Group Areas Act (1950); the Population Registration Act of 1950; the Bantu Authorities Act (1951); Natives Laws Amendment Act (1952), and Natives (Abolition of Passes) Act (1952). The Suppression of Communism Act (1950) gave the NP government widespread powers to suppress opposition to apartheid.

Political leaders were working hard to build cross-racial collaboration. The ANC, under new leaders like Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo, forged a (Congress) alliance with the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), the white Congress of Democrats, the Coloured People's Congress, communists, and trade unionists, and launched several resistance campaigns. The first major campaign was the Defiance Campaign of 1952 which resulted in around 8000 arrests across the country for defying apartheid legislation. Despite bannings, imprisonment, and house arrests, the Congress Alliance organised a mass gathering at Kliptown in June 1955 when the Freedom Charter was adopted. However, in December 1956, the state arrested 156 leaders, including Albert Luthuli on charges of treason. Their trial lasted five years.<sup>299</sup>

#### **Soccer in Natal, early 1950s**

It is against this charged political atmosphere and attempts to move away from race-based resistance that developments in soccer should be viewed. The inter-race tournament reflected attempts to forge cross-race contact, albeit ephemeral, on sports fields. Indians dominated the inter-race tournament until 1955 when the tide shifted in favour of Africans for the reasons discussed below. The dominance of Indians is remarkable given that Durban was, in Alegi's words, the 'epicentre of major changes in South African football in the 1950s.' The president of the DDFAFA and SAAFA, H.P.G. Ngwenya, was an influential figure in South African soccer. One of the best club teams of the early 1950s was Durban Bush Bucks whose players

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<sup>299</sup> For a discussion of apartheid and opposition to it, see William Beinart and Peter Delius (eds) *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*. London: Routledge, 1995; Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*. London: Longman, 1983; and Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*. London: Little, Brown, and Company, 1994.

“Kalamazoo” Mokone, Petrus “Halleluya” Zulu, and Herbert “Shordex” Zuma excited fans countrywide and were household names.<sup>300</sup>

The Natal team, made up mainly of players from Durban, defeated teams from Mozambique and the former Southern Rhodesia; while Natal also won the Moroka-Baloyi Cup (a national tournament of African provincial teams) seven times. Local matches between Bush Bucks, Wanderers, Zulu Royals, and City Blacks drew crowds of more than 20000 at the Somtseu Ground, which had a capacity of 15000. Soccer was very popular amongst urban Africans. Writing in 1963, Magubane observed that ‘important matches of the weekend are discussed in the buses, on the pavements during the lunch hour...’ DDAFA membership increased from 45 registered clubs in 1934 to 140 clubs in 1950 and 264 in 1959 with 5000 registered players. This was despite the paucity of facilities at the beginning of the decade.<sup>301</sup>

Given the powerful position of Natal African soccer in the country, the achievements of the Indian team are all the more impressive.

### **1952 - V.C. Moodley rises to the occasion**

The 1952 inter-race soccer series kicked off with a match between the Indians and Coloureds on 3 August.<sup>302</sup> An inspired Bob Pillay’s hat-trick won the Indians the match by three goals to one. *The Leader* reported that ‘Bob Pillay’s well merited three goals was all the more an outstanding achievement as it was his second successive hat-trick in a representative match.’<sup>303</sup> The Africans and Coloureds locked horns on 17 August<sup>304</sup> in a match reportedly played under difficult conditions as a stiff breeze blew from the race course end. The Africans found their first goal through G. Moeketsi who struck a well-timed ‘*rocket drive*’ in

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<sup>300</sup> See Alegi, *Laduma!*, 88.

<sup>301</sup> See Alegi, *Laduma!*, 89-90.

<sup>302</sup> The Indians’ team was: V.C. Moodley, K. Mariemuthoo and K. Rajgopal (brothers). Halves: Parthab Singh, Triggey Pillay and Titty Govender. Forwards: T. Rampath (captain), Manni Govender, Bob Pillay, Billy Reddy and “Kondia” Somalingam. Reserves: S. Munyandi, Ganson Naidoo, S. Mohan, “Lightie” Chinniah and P. Abrahams. The Coloureds’ match-day team comprised of: E. Grantham. Full-backs: L. Riley (Durban), A. Wood (Maritzburg). Halves: E. Grantham (Maritzburg) and N. Pratt (Maritzburg). Forwards: R. Dutlow (Maritzburg), D. Davis (Durban), A. Eksteen (Captain, Durban), L. McKenzie who was playing his debut for Natal (Maritzburg), A. Joseph (Durban). R. Dutlow, L. Grantham and A. Joseph were picked to represent the SA Coloureds for the A.I. Kajeje Trophy for 1952.

<sup>303</sup> ‘Indians Beat Coloureds 3 -1. Bob Pillay Scores Hat-trick’, *The Leader*, August 8, 1952, 11.

<sup>304</sup> The Coloureds team comprised of: E. Grantham, N. Pratt, N. Starkey, R. Dutlow, D. Davis, N. Pratt, A. Eksteen, L. McKenzie, B. Seale, A. Potter and A. Joseph. The manager was E.G. Rooks. The Africans were: E. Mtembu, P. Zulu, T. Zondi, G. Mbatha, A. Nzimande, A. Gumede, W. Mdhlalose, A. Luthuli, V. Makathini, G. Moeketsi and A. Khoza. The manager was Joseph Dhlomo.

the 15<sup>th</sup> minute: 1-0.<sup>305</sup> Eksteen equalised for the Coloureds on the half hour. With the wind behind their backs in the second half, the Africans' forwards adopted a "copy book" passing game but Grantham, the Coloureds' goalkeeper, was credited for his 'sterling role in the goal' which kept the Africans at bay.<sup>306</sup> *The Leader* noted that Coloureds' L. McKenzie was also a boxer who 'fully exhibited his prowess as a footballer of merit'.<sup>307</sup> Individual participation in multi-sport is not a common practice nowadays, but was fairly common during the inter-race matches' era. The match looked headed for a stalemate until Moeketsi scored for the Africans in the dying minutes of the game for a 2-1 victory.

The 1952 championship decider was played at Curries Fountain between the Indians and Africans on 7 September in the midst of the Defiance Campaign. According to newspaper reports, it was a dull and windy day marked by continuous rain. Conditions were not favourable for soccer and the 'great crowd' was drenched.<sup>308</sup> Neither *The Graphic* nor *Ilanga* provided reports on the matches between the Indians and Coloureds, and the Coloureds and Africans that preceded the final. *The Graphic* did not exist during the "road to the final" as it was only launched in September 1952. The Africans came to this match on a high after beating Transvaal Africans 7-1 and had also entered the final of the Moroka-Baloyi tournament to be played against Basutoland on 14 September in Johannesburg.<sup>309</sup>

The Africans scored first through H. Zuma from the penalty spot. G. Moeketsi doubled the score before half-time. Rampath was prominent for the Indians on the right flank but several of his crosses were not taken advantage of by his forwards. The Indians put up a much better performance in the second half as they played into the wind. Two headed goals from Rampath in the final ten minutes of the match, from crosses from Somalingam and Billy Reddy, brought the score to 2-2. According to a newspaper report, the Indians played gallantly against opponents who were physically much heavier but failed to make the best of the opportunities presented to them. The Indians changed their strategy in the second half by

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<sup>305</sup> 'Last Minute Victory for Africans', *The Leader*, August 22, 1952, 10.

<sup>306</sup> 'Last Minute Victory for Africans', *The Leader*, August 22, 1952, 10.

<sup>307</sup> 'Last Minute Victory for Africans', *The Leader*, August 22, 1952, 10.

<sup>308</sup> The Africans' starting IX, managed by Joseph Dhlomo of Isipingo, comprised of E. Mthembu, P. Zulu, T. Zondi, H. Shongwe, H. Zuma, A. Mabaso, V. Makatini, H. Gumede, A. Pashe, G. Moeketsi and A. Luthuli. The Indians' starting line-up, managed by K. Thumbadoo, was V.C. Moodley, K. Mariemuthoo, K. Rajagopal, Prathab Singh, Ganson Naidoo, Titty Govender, T. Rampath, Mike Chetty, Bob Pillay, B. Reddy and P. Somalingam.

<sup>309</sup> The team which beat Transvaal were: E. Mthembu, P. Zulu, T. Zondi, H. Shongwe, H. Zuma, A. Mabaso (captain), V. Makathini, H. Gumede, A. Pashe, G. Moeketsi and I. Mabaso.

abandoning their short-passing “carpet football” in favour of a long ball game which was more effective in the wet weather. The Indians reportedly wasted numerous scoring opportunities. It was an ‘off-day for the Natal centre-forward and main goal-getter, Bob Pillay who just did not appear to get going’ as he missed ‘not less than four “sitters”’.<sup>310</sup>

The final was replayed at Curries Fountain on 11 October 1952 to decide on the Singh Cup champion. This was the first time that a replay had been scheduled. Both teams made a number of changes. The Indians were not fully representative of Natal as Pietermaritzburg players were not included in the team for reasons that are not clear. The team was largely a Durban team. Notable absentees were Titty Govender, captain T. Rampath, Mike Chetty, and Bob Pillay.<sup>311</sup> Without their “star players” the Indian team fielded a ‘depleted side and, being confronted with formidable African opposition, there was least expected that they would win.’<sup>312</sup> The Africans also fielded a radically different starting 11 to the one that played the first game. Only P. Zulu, H. Shongwe, H. Zuma, V. Makatini, A. Pashe, G. Moeketsi and A. Luthuli remained.<sup>313</sup>

Newspaper reports show that the match was played in much better weather before a large crowd (*The Leader* reported it as 4000) of Africans, Indians, Coloureds, and whites (referred to as “Europeans”). The Africans had the upper hand and were ‘bombarding it [the Indian goal] from all angles but they found [defender] Mariemuthoo all over the place, using, not only his feet but his head also to effect clearances.’ *The Graphic* commented on the muscularity of African players, stating that ‘Boya Naidoo found himself like David among Goliaths’.<sup>314</sup> Despite the Africans being physically superior and enjoying greater possession and goal scoring opportunities, the Indians scored first when “Lightie” Chinniah received a pass from Somalingam, evaded an African defender, and ‘struck terrific drive which took the African keeper completely by surprise.’<sup>315</sup> The Africans besieged the Indian goal in the second half with the wizardry of Makathini, but V.C Moodley in the Indians’ goal rose to the

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<sup>310</sup> ‘Indo-African Final Drawn’, *The Leader*, September 12, 1952, 10.

<sup>311</sup> The Indian team was V. C. Moodley, K. Mariemuthoo, K. Rajagopal, Prathab Singh, Ganson Naidoo, C.V. Govender, Crash Morgan, L. Boya Naidoo, Lightie Chinniah, Billy Reddy and P. Somalingam, the captain. The substitutes were B.R. Naidoo, Bob Ganas, V.S. Pillay, Crash Morgan, Peter Abrahams and manager, K. Thumbadoo.

<sup>312</sup> ‘Brothers Play Outstanding Game in Cup Final’, *The Leader*, October 17, 1952, 10.

<sup>313</sup> The Africans’ line-up was A. Cominge, P. Zulu, M. Mvuni, G. Mabasa, H. Shongwe, H. Mthembu, G. Moeketsi, H. Zuma, V. Makathini, G. Mbatha, A. Phasha. The manager was Zeph Dhlomo and the reserve was H. Gumede.

<sup>314</sup> ‘Solitary Goal Helps Indians Regain Cup’, *The Graphic*, October 17, 1952, p. 7.

<sup>315</sup> ‘Solitary Goal Helps Indians Regain Cup’, *The Graphic*, October 17, 1952, p. 7.

occasion and made several outstanding saves.<sup>316</sup> Chinniah's 25<sup>th</sup> minute goal proved the difference between the two sides and the Indians regained the Singh Trophy. Cominga, the Africans' keeper, described Chinniah's goal: 'I was prepared for Lightie Chinniah's goal, but he just had a chance and drove it.'<sup>317</sup>

President of NISB, Nxumalo presented the trophy to Indian captain P. Somalingam. *The Leader* summarised the match: 'The fleet-footedness of "Kondiah", the brilliant manoeuvres of Lightie Chinniah, the solid defence of the brothers Rajgopal and K. Mariemuthoo and the fine keeping of V.C. Moodley were fine to watch.'<sup>318</sup>

### **1953: Africans disappoint again**

1953 commenced on a sad note for the soccer fraternity in Natal. *The Graphic* reported in January that Alfred James Abrahams had died in Durban on New Year's Eve after a short illness. Abrahams, who served as the secretary of the Maritzburg Coloured Welfare Association, was credited with fostering the merger of the Durban Branch of the African National Board and the Maritzburg Association with the Natal Coloured Welfare League. A man with a deep interest in sport, especially soccer and cricket, Abrahams was the treasurer of the Natal Coloured Soccer Board, served the Maritzburg Football and Cricket associations, and served on the sports grounds, soccer and cricket associations in Durban. He was also a founding member of the NISB and vice-chairman at the time of his death.<sup>319</sup> Abrahams was undoubtedly pivotal in the development of inter-racial soccer in Natal and in various Coloured associations.

At the NAFA's AGM in March 1953 in Pietermaritzburg, I.J. Motholo was elected president, Chas Mdladla was his deputy, and B.M. Molefe was elected secretary / treasurer. The NAFA's NISB delegation was I.J. Motholo, E. Jali and H.M. Molefe. Virtually all office-bearers were educated professionals, with some holding bachelor's degrees. The importance of the NISB is reflected in the fact that NAFA's leading official was part of the Board.

The first inter-race match of 1953 was played at Curries Fountain on 5 July. Reflecting the popularity of soccer amongst Indians, *The Graphic* published the full Indian team captained

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<sup>316</sup> 'Solitary Goal Helps Indians Regain Cup', *The Graphic*, October 17, 1952, p. 7.

<sup>317</sup> 'Brothers Play Outstanding Game in Cup Final', *The Leader*, October 17, 1952, 10.

<sup>318</sup> 'Brothers Play Outstanding Game in Cup Final', *The Leader*, October 17, 1952, 10.

<sup>319</sup> 'Inter-Race Soccer Official Dies', *The Graphic*, January 16, 1953, p. 2.



by “golie” V.C. Moodley of Mayville. His co-goalkeeper in the Natal team, B.R. “Jar” Naidoo was reported by Pivot, *The Leader’s* sports columnist, to have ‘announced his retirement from representative football’ in May 1953.<sup>320</sup> As a student and ardent fan of soccer it struck me that the naming of positions on the field has changed considerably, with the 1950s positions being a left and right back, a left halfback, right halfback, centre half, an inside right and inside left, outside right and outside left and a withdrawn centre forward. This is important as it demonstrates that local soccer was in tune with international trends. Known as the MU formation, this soccer formation was popularised by the great Hungarian team of the early 1950s. It placed an equal number of players on both halves of the field. The key player is the centre forward who plays from a withdrawn position and draws out the opposition centre to make room for the other forwards. This formation decreased in popularity from the late 1950s.

Unlike *Ilanga*, *The Graphic* and *The Leader* gave extensive coverage to the tournament, publishing a fixture list in advance. The Indians beat the Africans 2-1 watched by what the reports indicated was one of the largest crowds ever to assemble at Curries Fountain.<sup>321</sup> *The Leader’s* headline stated *6 000 See Close Indian Win*.<sup>322</sup> This match was described as ‘special’. The large crowd created a tense atmosphere and the match provided ‘by far the best in exhibitions of slick passing, cool and jingling ball control and rapid fire finishes’.<sup>323</sup> *The Graphic’s* reports are really enjoyable to read as one feels as if he or she is almost in the stands watching the game. In the opening stages, W. Mdhlalose stroke fired ‘a rocket shot which sailed a few inches past the goal line to shiver the Indian spectators as the first thrill of the game’.<sup>324</sup> Somalingam scored the Indians’ first goal after a ‘swift combination’ with Oliver, before “Boya” Naidoo doubled the lead when he came from “nowhere” after Oliver’s ‘point blank range’ was pushed by the Africans’ goalkeeper.<sup>325</sup> The Africans’ goal was scored by Bophela midway through the second half. Figurative, idiomatic and poetic writing filled match reports. Examples in *The Graphic* includes:

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<sup>320</sup> Pivot. ‘City Flashes’, *The Leader*, May 8, 1953, 14.

<sup>321</sup> The Indian line-up was V.C. Moodley, K. Mariemuthoo, K. Rajgopal, G.C. Naidoo, S. Mohan, S. Madray Chetty, T. Rampath, Michael Chetty, J. Oliver, L. Boya Naidoo, P. Somalingam, and the manager was R. Kallie. African team: Between the poles was S. Mkhwanazi. The on-field players were T. Zondi, P. Zulu, H. Shongwe, P.D. Dhloomo, M. Mvuni, W. Mdhalose, V. Makhathini, E. Rophela, G. Moeketsi and V. Mkhabela. Zeph Dhloomo was the manager.

<sup>322</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer. 6 000 See Close Indian Win’, *The Leader*, July 11, 1953, 10.

<sup>323</sup> ‘Africans Go Down in Fine Game’, *The Graphic*, July 11, 1953, 6.

<sup>324</sup> ‘Africans Go Down in Fine Game’, *The Graphic*, July 11, 1953, 6.

<sup>325</sup> ‘Inter-Race Soccer. 6 000 See Close Indian Win’, *The Leader*, July 11, 1953, 10.

- ‘The African half-line twinkle-toed about the field’;
- ‘The goalkeeper had to jump like a cat after a rat’;
- ‘The goalkeeper saved a strike with outstretched hands to earn the loud applause of the gallery’;
- ‘The winger supplied dash and thrust’;
- ‘The Africans moved the ball as if it were a game of billiards’;
- ‘The Africans began to infuse many new methods to get the better of the exchanges’;
- ‘Billy Reddy aroused the spectators in an episode of dribbling’; and
- ‘The Africans, at one stage, hoodwinked the Indian defence completely’.<sup>326</sup>

Unlike the 1940s coverage in *Ilanga*, the reports now gave credit to both sides and there was little racial jingoism, perhaps reflecting a new-found maturity, appreciation of the skills of others, and even political developments. In fact, the match report in *Ilanga* was a short eight lines:

*‘Izingqungqulu zamaNdiya zedlule ngehub oemdlalweni omuhle webhola waBantu namaNdiya weGeorge Singh Trophy ... Indians 2 Africans 1.’<sup>327</sup>*

Indian greets easily defeated Africans in a good game between Africans and Indians for the George Singh Trophy.

On 19 July the Coloureds played the Africans and on 2 August, the Indians played the Coloureds. Africans lost their second match 5-3.<sup>328</sup> *The Graphic* indicated that the Africans could be “excused” as they had returned from a “strenuous” trip to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in the previous week where they had won three matches by beating Salisbury 3-2, Southern Rhodesia 3-1, and Belgian Congo 3-2. The match in Southern Rhodesia commemorated the centenary of the birth of Cecil Rhodes. However, the *Ilanga* reporter appeared agitated and made no room for excuses:

*Umdlalo waBantu ubungekho ngempela okungangokuthi kubonakale zisuka nje phansi ukuthi bazokwehlulwa kabi.’<sup>329</sup>*

<sup>326</sup> ‘Africans Go Down in Fine Game’, *The Graphic*, July 11, 1953, 6.

<sup>327</sup> ‘Adlulile AmaNdiya’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 11, 1953, 2.

<sup>328</sup> Coloured team: J. McAllister, Hippolite, B. Seale (captain), D. Harvey, L. Grantham, N. Starkey, A. Joseph, R. Dutlow, D. Davis, P. Minnie, R. Gendon. Reserves were; A. Eksteen, G. Montgomery and H. Stolls. It is not clear who featured for the Africans as *Ilanga*, *The Graphic* and *The Leader* did not publish the line-up.

<sup>329</sup> ‘Umdlalo WamaNdiya NamaKhaladi’, *Ilanga LaseNatali* July 25, 1953, 4.

The African's standard of play was so poor that it was foreseen from kick-off that they would be defeated.

The Africans were without regulars such as goalkeeper S. Mkhwanazi, backs T. Zondi and P. Zulu, and midfielders M.M. Vuma, V. Makhathini, E. Rophela, and G. Moeketsi. According to a match reporter the Coloureds' victory was due to their tactical changes. The victory 'lay in the fact that their idea was a four-man forward line, with one inside man lying back to collect clearances of the African defenders and then to send his own players marching for the goals.'<sup>330</sup> The Africans failed to convert their chances when they 'out manoeuvred the defence', and a hat-trick by Davis and a goal each from R. Dutlow and A. Joseph secured a 5-3 win. The Coloureds led 2-0 at half-time with the Africans missing two penalties in the first half. The first was awarded to them 'owing to an infringement' but their unnamed centre-forward from 'about twenty feet sent a terrible shot which went wide.'<sup>331</sup> Mkabela, Dhlomo and Mdhlaloso scored for the Africans.

The result meant that the Coloureds had a chance to win the Singh Trophy when they met the Indians on 2 August 1953.<sup>332</sup> Although the Coloureds were "underdogs", the match review warned that if they 'showed the same speed, quick tackle and thrust' as they did against the Africans they could cause an upset.<sup>333</sup> This was not to be as the Indians demonstrated their dominance by winning 6-4. *The Graphic* provided a detailed and evocative report. The Indians led 3-2 at half-time thanks to a brace by Bob Pillay and a goal by Somalingam, while K. Rajgopal's own-goal and another by D. Davis kept the Coloureds in the match. In the second half Kondiah scored the fourth goal: 4-2. Pillay was again the nemesis in the Coloureds' defence as he scored the team's fifth and his second goal. This was referred to as 'spectacular' as he 'outstripped the defence' and scored in grand style.<sup>334</sup> Rampath scored the fifth goal from a penalty spot. A. Joseph scored the Coloureds' two goals. Natal Indians were, again, crowned the Inter-Race Soccer champions.

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<sup>330</sup> 'Coloureds Beat Africans 4 - 3', *The Leader*, July 24, 1953, 11.

<sup>331</sup> 'Coloureds Beat Africans 4 - 3', *The Leader*, July 24, 1953, 11.

<sup>332</sup> The Indian team for the day comprised of V.C. Moodley, K. Mariemuthoo, K. Rajgopal, Manni Naidoo, Legacy Naidoo, T. Rampath, B. Madray, K.S. Nair, Bob Pillay, Billy Reddy, J. Oliver, L. Boya Naidoo, Bob Ganes, Boyd Maistry, "Kondiah" Somalingam, and the manager was R. Kallie. The *Leader*, for example, wrote that 'at time of going to press, the Coloured team had not been announced'. ('Indo-Coloured Final' *The Leader*, July 31, 1953, 11)

<sup>333</sup> 'Inter-Race Final: Indian Prospects in Sunday's Match', *The Graphic*, August 1, 1953, 7.

<sup>334</sup> 'Indians Retain Singh Trophy', *The Leader*, August 7, 1953, 11.

### 1954: “Matambo” stands his ground

The first match of the 1954 tournament was played between the Coloureds and Africans at Curries Fountain on 9 May.<sup>335</sup> The tournament commenced earlier than usual in the calendar year to accommodate the national provincial inter-race tournament organised under the auspices of the SASF for the A.I. Kajeje Cup. Gaining revenge for their defeat in the previous year, the Africans cruised to a 5-2 win before a capacity crowd. According to reports, the banks and the pavilion at Curries Fountain were packed to capacity. In an article in *The Natal Witness*, republished in *Ilanga*, the journalist revealed that he was the only white present at the match with the exception of a couple of heavily armed policemen.<sup>336</sup> He was impressed with the whole setting as both sides ‘delighted a huge crowd with their spirited play’ but picked a few individuals who were “the most popular” and “clever”.<sup>337</sup> Players given special mention included inside forwards “Ace of Trouble”, “Slow Motion”, and “Fox”. The report added that the “girls” were beautifully dressed and that in the Pavilion the spectators spoke “good” English. The reporter was fascinated by the players’ nicknames: “Terror”, “Round and Round”, “Concrete”, “Deliver”, “Seven Days”, “Amen”, Englishman, “Tit for Tat”, and “Doctor”.

Within the first ten minutes, “Cracker-Jack” Fakazi scored twice for the Africans. Fakazi ‘slipped through the half line and with a running drive crashed in’ his second goal.<sup>338</sup> He completed his hat trick to make the half-time score 3-0. The Coloureds ‘combined cleverly and made a number of visits to the African goal’ but the African “wall” of the “bearded” A. Nzimande and P. Zulu proved impenetrable.<sup>339</sup> The Coloureds threw caution to the wind and scored twice but it was too little, too late:

*Ezom’Afrika zingawakholokothela aze abe ngamashumi amabili uma ezamaKhaladi  
zingabhasobhi, kodwa ezamaKhaladi manje zalifuna zalithola elokuqala zabuye  
zaliphinda elesibili kodwa kungasazi ngoba besekubonakala ukuthi kasisekho  
isikhathi.*<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>335</sup> The following players represented the Coloureds: S. Zunckel, R. Hippolite, R. Riley, H. Stols, L. Grantham, N. Starkey, V. Dolley, R. Dutlow (Captain), F. Wegner, P. Minnie and R. Dalais. Reserves were D. Davies and G. Montgomery. The Africans’ side was as follows: R. Mthembu, C. Makanya, A. Nzimande, D. Dhlomo, C. Khumalo, V. Makanya, A. Luthuli, W. Ndimande, G. Moeketsi and E. Fakazi.

<sup>336</sup> ‘Excited Crowd’, *IlangaLaseNatali*, May 29 1954, 12.

<sup>337</sup> ‘Excited Crowd’, *IlangaLaseNatali*, May 29 1954, 12.

<sup>338</sup> ‘Coloureds Trounced by Africans’, *The Graphic*, May 15, 1953, 7.

<sup>339</sup> ‘Coloureds Trounced by Africans’, *The Graphic*, May 15, 1953, 7.

<sup>340</sup> ‘UmdlaloOmkhuluWebhola: AbantunamaKhaladi’, *IlangaLaseNatali*, May 15, 1954, 1.

The Africans could have scored even 20 goals if the Coloureds were not cautious, but the Coloureds pulled one back and scored the second goal but to no avail as the match was nearing an end.

The Africans scored twice more through W. Ndimande and A. Luthuli to make the final score 5-2. *The Graphic* reporter wrote that ‘the footwork of the African team was a treat to watch and they gave a masterly exhibition of short passing, good ball-control and rapid-fire shooting.’<sup>341</sup>

The Indians played the Coloureds at Curries Fountain on 23 May 1954. The local soccer fraternity’s chief interest in this match lay in the fact that it was a “full-dress rehearsal” for the Coloureds who were to participate in the national Coloured Tournament for the Stuttaford’s Cup in Durban from 11 to 20 June.<sup>342</sup> The Coloureds once again suffered a 3-2 loss even though they were credited with playing better football on the day but failed to grasp their many opportunities. The brilliance of the Indians’ goalkeeper, V.C. Moodley was the difference between the two sides as he denied the Coloureds the chance to make the ball “kiss” the back of the net on various occasions.

There was a two-minute silence in memory of the brothers Rajgopal and Mariemuthoo’s father. *The Leader* wrote that the absence of the two brothers alongside Rampath and Somalingam was ‘never more keenly felt’. R. Dubois put the Coloureds in front from the penalty spot, while James Oliver ‘netted with a rocket drive’ to level the score.<sup>343</sup> In the second half, V. Dolley put the Coloureds ahead when he scored after a ‘brilliant bout of passing.’ This lead was shortlived as Billy Reddy intercepted a long-pass by a Coloureds player and passed it to Peetha Moodley who buried the ball home to make it 2-2. In the final quarter of the match, Bob Pillay bagged a 3-2 win for the Indians after ‘selling the dummy to two opponents’ and firing home from an awkward position.<sup>344</sup> *The Leader* was critical of the Indians’ team selectors, writing that it was an indiscretion on the part of the Natal selectors to use an ‘occasion such as this one for the purposes of experimenting’ because ‘one doesn’t

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<sup>341</sup> ‘Coloureds Trounced by Africans’, *The Graphic*, May 15, 1953, 7.

<sup>342</sup> After the defeat by the Africans the Coloureds made five changes to the starting line-up, bringing in E.G Grantham, D. Harvey, N. Starkey, D. Davids, and A. Eksteen who captained the team. The Indians kept faith with the team that represented them in previous months but introduced Peetha Moodley of Maritzburg while brothers K. Mariemuthoo and K. Rajgopal were unavailable due to the death of their father.

<sup>343</sup> ‘Coloureds Shine, but “V.C.” Brilliant in Goals Saves Indians.’ *The Graphic*, May 29, 1954, 7.

<sup>344</sup> ‘Coloureds Shine, but “V.C.” Brilliant in Goals Saves Indians.’ *The Graphic*, May 29, 1954, 7.

take such chances in a fight of battle – it is like committing hari-kari.<sup>345</sup> This was a reference to the decision to play Boyd Maistry at right wing and Peetha Moodley at left wing.

As soccer was a “no salary” extra-mural activity for the players, many had to choose between their work and the game. The soccer fraternity lost a number of great players in this way. One was T. Rampath who retired from football in May 1954 as soccer was ‘interfering with his career as a school teacher’ and did not allow him to ‘concentrate on his studies for a degree.’<sup>346</sup> Rampath’s “retirement” at the age of 24 was a shock to the football fraternity:

Soccer fans throughout the country will be shocked to learn of the decision of the national right-wing, T. Rampath, not to play in representative soccer in future ... He is referred as the country’s most outstanding right-winger – among Europeans, Indians and Coloureds.<sup>347</sup>

The deciding match was played at Curries Fountain on 4 July.<sup>348</sup> The match preview described the Africans’ forwards as the players to watch because they had ‘a formidable combination with the famous Bush Bucks trio (“Kalamazoo”, “Halleluya”, and “Shordex”) occupying the three inner berths in the forwards line ... they have a perfect understanding between each other and are capable of giving the Indian defence anxious moments.’<sup>349</sup>

G.D. Govender, *The Leader’s* sports journalist, was not pleased with the selection of Boyd Maistry: ‘I cannot take kindly the selector’s decision to include Boyd Maistry in the team, especially after his failure against the Coloureds in the (first) inter-race series.’<sup>350</sup> Govender was previewing the Indian-Coloured part of the centenary celebration match on 26 June which ended 2-1 in favour of the Coloureds. There were only 2 000 spectators. He was of the opinion that the NIFA should shoulder the blame for underperforming players and ‘take sterner action against all those who default.’<sup>351</sup> He identified Bob Pillay as one such player.

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<sup>345</sup> ‘Indians Win 3 – 2 Over Coloureds’, *The Leader*, May 28, 1954, 11.

<sup>346</sup> ‘Rampath’s “No” decision a Shock’, *The Leader*, May 28, 1954, 11.

<sup>347</sup> ‘Rampath’s “No” decision a Shock’, *The Leader*, May 28, 1954, 11.

<sup>348</sup> As was its habit, *Ilanga* only published the African starting eleven: R. Mthembu, T. Zondi, O. Nazo, A. Ndimande, D. Dhlomo, A. Luthuli, I. Mabaso, W. Ndimane, G. Moeketsi, M. Mvuni, and captain, H. Shongwe.

<sup>349</sup> ‘Inter-Race Match’, *The Graphic*, July 3, 1954, 6.

<sup>350</sup> G.D. Govender. ‘Coloureds to Play Indian XI’, *The Leader*, June 18, 1954, 11.

<sup>351</sup> G.D. Govender. ‘Coloureds 2 – 1 Victory’, *The Leader*, July 2, 1954, 15.

In what would likely be termed a “racist statement” today, *The Leader* credited itself for influencing this “change”:

A word of praise for the referee. *The Leader’s* suggestion that Europeans be employed in this department ensured that the game proceed without incident ... Our local fans may be forgiven for their enthusiasm at times, but it was largely due to the presence of a complete outsider in a European soccer referee which made way for this harmony.<sup>352</sup>

Watched by an ‘exceptionally large and shrilly enthusiastic cosmopolitan crowd’ of approximately 9000,<sup>353</sup> the Indians won the final 3-2. In a break from tradition, the match was officiated by a White referee whose ‘decisions were beyond reproach and such factors largely contributed to the entertaining game.’<sup>354</sup> *Ilanga* reported that the Indians were attacking continuously:

*Umdlalo zisuka nje ebhandeni uthande ukubuyela ngasekhaya ... kube sengathi athelwe ngopepelele amaNdiya abethi nje uma eseza nalo kubande amathumbu, ezijika izinsizwa zakithi zizezilale phansi.*<sup>355</sup>

Straight after kick-off the Indians attacked as if chillies were thrown on them. When they came the Africans’ nerves accelerated as they outplayed them.

The Indians opened the scoring in the 25<sup>th</sup> minute. The Africans pressed but “Matambo” kept them at bay until the last minutes of the first half, when “Fobes”, who was a handful throughout, equalised:

*Ubelibamba lapho uFobes kudume ihlombe yonke indawo kodwa kufumaniseka ukuthi kayindawo ngempela ngenxa yokuba belingekho nelincane ithuba lokudlula kuMathambo.*<sup>356</sup>

When “Fobes” was in possession of the ball the stadium erupted into applause but there was not even a minor opportunity of passing Matambo.

Despite being injured, “Matambo” Muriemuthoo was hailed for his splendid performance for the Indians. G.D. Govender of *The Leader* wrote:

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<sup>352</sup> G.D. Govender. ‘Indians Win Inter-Race’, *The Leader*, July 9, 1954, 15.

<sup>353</sup> ‘Africans “Tops” in Inter-Race Match, but Indians “Escape” with the Singh’s Trophy’, *The Graphic*, June 26, 1954, 7.

<sup>354</sup> ‘Africans “Top” in Inter-Race Match but Indians “Escape” with Singh’s Trophy’, *Graphic*, July 19, 1954, 6.

<sup>355</sup> ‘Bahlulwa Futhi Abantu NgamaNdiya’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 10, 1954, 4.

<sup>356</sup> ‘Bahlulwa Futhi Abantu NgamaNdiya’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 10, 1954, 4.

Once again, to Mariemuthoo's eternal credit, he saved Indian soccer prestige not only by repulsing determined and forceful African raids but by paving the way for the second goal ... The Africans were tigerish in their onslaughts on the Indian fort but "Matambo", despite his injury, clung tenaciously to his post and although at times his shots were feeble his timely presence did serve to upset beautiful African formations.<sup>357</sup>

Five minutes into the second half, the Africans scored their second goal to take a lead and kept pressing forward, but it was the Indians who scored in rapid succession to make the final score 3-2 and retain the inter-race trophy. Bob Pillay scored two goals and the third was scored by Maistry. The newspapers, including *Ilanga*, focused on the Indians' win and did not mention the Africans' goal scorers. Indians dominance over the Africans and Coloureds continued.

C.W. Nxumalo, E.G. Rooks, and George Singh, president, vice-president, and secretary of the NISB, respectively, had a special message for the sporting fraternity: 'We hope that both players and fans will show, as in the past, the real true spirit of racial goodwill and tolerance which have been witnessed in all our matches since 1946.'<sup>358</sup> The large crowd honoured this request as it, 'behaved and did not surge into the ground or cause inconvenience to the ground stewards as it was the case in most of the "big" matches.'<sup>359</sup>

### **Truly Non-Racial: Natal versus Transvaal, August 1954**

The Natal and Transvaal Inter-Race Soccer Boards organised several inter-provincial non-racial matches in which composite teams of Indian, Coloured, and African players played against one another. These matches were path-breaking in charting a new course in South African soccer history. They were usually played at the end of the year, following the provincial inter-race tournaments. What *The Graphic* described as the "Match of the Year" was to be staged on the 16 August 1953. Above the "Match of the Year" tag were these eye-catching words: *See your African, Coloured and Indian Stars in One Composite Team*. Given the Indian dominance of the NISB tournament it is not surprising that seven of the Natal team were Indians.<sup>360</sup>

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<sup>357</sup> G.D. Govender. 'Indians Win Inter-Race', *The Leader*, July 9, 1954, 15.

<sup>358</sup> 'Africans "Top" in Inter-Race Match but Indians "Escape" with Singh's Trophy', *Graphic*, 19 July 1954, 6.

<sup>359</sup> 'Africans "Top" in Inter-Race Match but Indians "Escape" with Singh's Trophy', *Graphic*, 19 July 1954, 6.

<sup>360</sup> *The Graphic*, August 15, 1953, 3; *The Graphic*, October 16, 1959, 11. The Transvaal line-up was W. Davids, D. Julies, K. Bower, Sydney Moonien, B. Dumakude, S. Khojane, Chris van Kramberg, Gerald Francis, O.



The Transvaal players were given a reception at the Durban City Hall on the evening of 15 August which was attended by the Mayor and several Councillors. It is surprising that in a context of exceptional political turmoil and heightened awareness, soccer officials still sought such patronage from the white authorities. This demonstrates that they were beholden to them for facilities as well as permission to travel from province to province, as was required by law. For its part the City Council encouraged sport among urban Africans as this was seen an antidote to political protest or drinking beer.

A mixed crowd of more than 12000 Indians, Africans, whites and Coloureds watched the match. “Guest of honour”, the Deputy Mayor of Durban, Councillor Robinson, met the players before the kick-off. Rampath scored Natal’s first goal and Gerald Francis equalised for Transvaal as the teams went half-time deadlocked. In the second half, Bob Pillay put Natal in front but Transvaal took control of the match. They were ‘determined to make the day a red-letter day when their players worked with a clock-like precision, displaying ball control which was a delight to see with fine displays from players such as A. Joseph who put a gallant sprint to score but the Natal keeper was alert enough.’<sup>361</sup> Gerald Francis scored twice for Transvaal and they took a 3-2 lead before Rampath levelled the score. Francis rose to the occasion once more, and proved to be the man of the match when he scored in the final minute to snatch a win for Transvaal in an entertaining and path-breaking match.

The next phase of the Natal Inter-Race tournament saw Africans finally breaking the shackles and proving their ascendancy.

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Adams, Links Padayachee, C. Denalane, and the manager was P.C. Mokgokong. The Natal team was V.C. Moodley, K. Rajagopal, B. Seale, H. Shongwe, Mannie Naicker, M. Chetty, T. Rampath, V. Makatini, Bob Pillay, Billy Reddy, A. Joseph. The manager was I.J Matholo.

<sup>361</sup> ‘Record Crowd Sheer Great Soccer’, *The Graphic*, August 22, 1953, 7

## Chapter Five

### **African Dominance: The Natal Inter-Race Soccer Tournament, 1955-1959**

The period from the mid-1950s marked a shift in soccer power in Natal with the Africans gaining ascendancy on the field. This was not by chance, but was the result of more professional organisation on the part of African administrators, and superior preparations following the appointment of a new coach who had played soccer in the English first division. Important changes at local level towards non-racial soccer were accompanied by those at national level which thrust soccer into the international spotlight. While the Treason Trial dominated national headlines, soccer was at the forefront of challenging white hegemony.

#### **International affiliation: national developments in South Africa**

Soccer developments at local level were marked by important changes on the African continent as well as globally. This period was marked by attempts by the South African Soccer Federation (SASF) to give non-racial soccer an international status. The white South African Football Association (SAFA) was accepted into the world body, the Federation of International Football Association (FIFA), at the 1952 Helsinki Congress, even though it represented just 18 percent of registered soccer players in the country.<sup>362</sup>

Africa's representatives at the 1953 FIFA Congress consisted of just four countries, Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan and South Africa. Their primary interest was to ensure that Africa have its own continental organisation. They were initially brusquely rebuffed by FIFA's European majority. The conception of the presidents of the world body, Sir Jule Rimet (1921-54), Rudolfe Seeldrayers (1954-56) and Arthur Drewry (1956-61) 'followed a paternal and neo-colonial view of global development in which economic and cultural hegemony radiated from a 'modern' European centre to a 'pre-modern' third world periphery.'<sup>363</sup> Africans found anti-imperialist allies among the Soviet satellite states of Eastern Europe and anti-European allies in South America and forced FIFA to relent. The CAF was formed in Khartoum in 1957, with the first edition of the Cup of Nations held in Sudan in February.<sup>364</sup> South Africa was excluded from the three-team tournament won by Egypt.

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<sup>362</sup> Alegi, *Laduma*, 112.

<sup>363</sup> Darby, "Stanley Rous's 'own goal'," 260.

<sup>364</sup> D Goldblatt, *The Ball is Round: A Global History of Football* (London: Viking, 2006), 493.

The NP regime signalled its intention to either send an all-white or a Black South African team to the Cup of Nations, but not a non-racial team. This was in keeping with the philosophy of the white-dominated Football Association of South Africa (FASA) which had sent an exclusively white delegation to the 1953 FIFA Congress. However, apartheid South Africa and its handmaidens in soccer faced a continent inspired by an insurgent pan-Africanism buoyed by struggles for national liberation. Inside South Africa, the anti-apartheid struggle had spread through the Defiance Campaign of 1952. Many of these movements, led by the ANC, rallied around a common programme, the Freedom Charter adopted at Kliptown in 1955, to present united opposition to apartheid.

These developments placed apartheid strongly in the public imagination of Africans across the continent, especially in the newly formed independent states. None symbolised the drive for pan-Africanism more than Kwame Nkrumah who became Prime Minister of the Gold Coast in 1951 and leader of independent Ghana in 1957. Ghana immediately joined the CAF. The Ghanaian national team was called the “Black Stars”, a reference to Marcus Garvey’s chartered ship of 1922, *The Black Star*, in which he hoped to take Africans back to Africa from the Caribbean and the Americas. Ghana was a key player in the launch of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Abba in 1963. Reflecting on this period when he was still of school-going age, former South African President, Thabo Mbeki said that he and other freedom fighters “saw the black star rise on the firmament.... We knew then that the promise we had inherited would be honoured. The African giant was awakening!”<sup>365</sup>

South Africa was duly barred from participation in the Cup of Nations. The issue of South Africa continued to dominate the activities of the CAF and FIFA. The non-racial SASF, formed in 1951, applied three times to take FASA’s place at FIFA. While it did not succeed persistent protests by the SASF led to FIFA’s adoption of the Rome Resolution, an anti-discriminatory measure that was to lead to FASA’s suspension in 1961 for failing to operate as a non-racial association.<sup>366</sup> Meanwhile the number of African countries affiliating to FIFA continued to grow through the late 1950s and early 1960s.

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<sup>365</sup> M. Gevisser, *The Dream Deferred: Thabo Mbeki* (Johannesburg and Cape Town, Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2007), xxxii.

<sup>366</sup> Darby, “Stanley Rous’s ‘own goal,’” 263.

Sensing the changing mood, the SAFA offered the SASF affiliate membership without voting rights but this was rejected. Pressure from the SASF resulted in FIFA accepting that SAFA did not represent the majority of South African soccer players and did not have the ‘standing of a real national association that can govern and develop football in accordance with the Statutes of FIFA.’<sup>367</sup>

A little recorded development during this period was the formation of the short-lived Coordinating Committee for International Recognition of Sport (CCIRS) by Dennis Brutus, who was one of South Africa’s great poets and, as a political activist, was incarcerated on Robben Island. The CCIRS’ basic principle was that ‘all South Africans should be allowed to represent their country – if they are good enough.’ While the CCIRS was short-lived, it established the principle that ‘all-white teams were not entitled to describe themselves as South African’ and it was the forerunner of the anti-apartheid organisation, the South African Sports Association (1958) and the South African Council of Sport (1973).<sup>368</sup>

At local level, this period was witness to on-going attempts to develop inter-racial and non-racial soccer.

### **Africans victory at last, 1955**

There was a flurry of activity to mark the start of the 1955 season. At the NAFA’s meeting in April, I.J. Mathoho remained president, with A.M.S. Mhlongo as vice-president, whilst H.M. Molife was re-elected as treasurer and secretary. T.A. Nene, I.J. Motholo, and E.C. Jali were elected as NAFA’s delegates to the NISB. NAFA members Jas Africa, P.O. Sikhakhane, and R.A.W. Ngcobo, who was also a delegate to SAAFA, were university graduates, once again demonstrating the role of business and professional elites in promoting soccer. The Africans’ poor performance in 1954 did not go unnoticed by soccer fans. The popularity of the game amongst Africans in Natal symbolised more than the actual match on the field. Victory implied Zulu superiority over other race groups. Defeat implied succumbing to the authority of others, especially Indians, which did not go down well. For example, in a letter to *Ilanga*, an African fan named Stompie, asked whether the Natal African team was ever going to regain its lost laurels. He was furious that the Africans had experienced defeat at the hands of Indians year after year. He blamed the poor performance on team selection and biased

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<sup>367</sup> Alegi, *Laduma!*, 112.

<sup>368</sup> Alegi, *Laduma!*, 112.

refereeing. Natal selectors were 'either prejudiced against certain areas or clubs or they just don't care very much about the interest of the game for the Africans.'<sup>369</sup> Stompie implored African soccer administrators to work in the interests of African 'pride'.

The Africans turned the tables on the Indians in 1955, starting with a "friendly" match at Curries Fountain in May. In its 14 May issue *Ilanga* published the African team and, in a break with tradition, the Indian team was published in the next issue.<sup>370</sup> The most famous Indian player was Marriemuthoo, known amongst Africans as "Mathambo", which translates to "bones" in English. It appears that this name was bestowed on him because he was a hard-tackling defender who, it was feared, would break the bones of his opponents in tackles. The Africans won the match by a mammoth eight goals to one.

The first match of the 1955 NISB tournament was played between defending champions Indians and Coloureds on 3 July at Currie's Fountain. The Indians won 3-2. *Ilanga* also provided a match report:

*Ngokuphazima kweso amaNdiya anikwa ifree-kick, wayiqulela phakathi uGansen Naidoo, umfo omude owabedlala ihhafu.*<sup>371</sup>

Within 'the blink of an eye' the Indians scored first through a free-kick by the tall Indians half, Gansen Naidoo.

*Kwathi yaluyalu amaKhaladi nawo athola ipenalty wayibeka phakathi umfana wesenta kwaba 1-1.*

After a few incidents the Coloureds were awarded a penalty which was converted by their centre-half, 1-1.<sup>372</sup>

*Afuna elinye khona eduze kodwa kwabonakala ukuthi nokho kuvaliwe emuva kumaKhaladi ala ukhasha noGolie wawo wala ngisho impukane idlula.*<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>369</sup> 'Will D & D and Natal Soccer Teams Regain Lost Laurels', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, May, 7, 1955, 16.

<sup>370</sup>The Africans team published in *Ilanga* on 14 May 2013: V. Makathini, B. Shongwe, M. Ntshangase, A. Mzimela, C. Khumalo, P. Zulu, G. Moeketsi, D. Kunene, R. Kearnesy, T. Zungu, D. Dhlomo, and A. Dimba. Indian team: V.C. Moodley, K. Marriemuthoo, Bob Ganos, D. Parthab Singh, Gunson Naidoo, T. Rampath, S.P. Govender, Bob Pillay, Peter Abrahams and Thiripath Naidoo.

<sup>371</sup> 'Umdlalo WamaKhaladi namaNdiya', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 9, 1955, 4.

<sup>372</sup> 'Umdlalo WamaKhaladi namaNdiya', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 9, 1955, 4.

<sup>373</sup> 'Umdlalo WamaKhaladi namaNdiya', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 9, 1955, 4.

The Indians meant business on the day as they quickly responded by another goal to make the score 2-1. Their endeavours to score a third goal were intercepted by the Coloureds' defence and their goalkeeper whose saves could have prevented even a passing fly.

The Indians led 2-1 at half-time. The names of the players who scored the equaliser for the Coloureds and the Indians' second goal were not published. They were referred to as follows:

*Wayibeka phakathi umfana* (the Coloured boy scored).

*Walishaya phakathi futhi umfana weNdiya* (the Indian boy scored again).

The English version of *Ilanga* did state that Naidoo's goal was scored within five minutes and that the 'Indians were fast moving. The Coloureds backs, on the other hand, were just a wall of defence while T. Naidoo and his centre forward Bob Pillay combined magnificently and were a persistent danger to the Coloureds back line.'<sup>374</sup> Mention was also made of the Coloureds' inside right, P. Minnie who was a nuisance to the defence; his 'fast shots and dribbling kept the "famous Mathambo" doubting all the time.'<sup>375</sup> The Coloureds did equalise but the Indians scored a last-minute winner.

The match between the Africans and Coloureds was played on 17 July. The change in the fortunes of the African team was linked to the appointment by NAFA of E.C. "Topper" Brown, a former professional footballer with Arsenal in England, as coach. It was the visionary Ngwenya who took the decision to hire Brown, who mixed English discipline and organisation with natural African flair. The Natal Africans won both the Moroka-Baloyi Cup and the Singh Trophy in 1955. It appears that few Africans objected to the appointment of a white coach. After seeing the Africans play under Brown, *The Leader* reported that the team 'indulged in some of the finest artistic soccer...ever seen. Their ball control, deft touches, the accuracy of their passing, and their ability to find the open gaps was indeed amazing.'<sup>376</sup> Another report stated that the Africans showed 'purpose, well thought-out plans and counter tactics, and a generally superior knowledge of the game.' Under Brown, 'Natal

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<sup>374</sup> 'Natal Indians Beat Natal Coloureds at Currie's Fountain', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 9, 1955, 20.

<sup>375</sup> 'Natal Indians Beat Natal Coloureds at Currie's Fountain', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 9, 1955, 20.

<sup>376</sup> *The Leader*, 24 June 1956. In Alegi, *Laduma!*, 103.

soccer is now the country's show-piece.<sup>377</sup> Prior to the tournament, *New Age* commented that the 'wisest thing Natal Africans have done so far is to engage a professional coach, Topper Brown, to improve their soccer.'<sup>378</sup>

As a result of the success of the Africans, the match against the Coloureds was eagerly awaited. *Ilanga* reported:

*Siyolala singalele thina namuhla esithanda ibhola, sengathi ngaba sekusile sizibonele ngawethu phaqa.*

We the football lovers would have a sleepless night wishing it was tomorrow already so that we could watch live soccer.<sup>379</sup>

The reporter was confident that 'Durban soccer fans will go wild with excitement' when the two teams met at Curries.<sup>380</sup> The match commenced at a furious pace with the Africans playing more attacking soccer. They were rewarded when "The Doctor" fired a thunder shot from outside the 18-yard box which the Coloureds' goalkeeper failed to save:

*Washaya ... laze layocoboshela kuGoalie wamaKhaladi wathi uyalingqaka laphunyuka lagingqika ngomhlane langenaphakathi.*<sup>381</sup>

The "Doctor" stroked a shot that the Coloureds' goalkeeper tried but failed to save as the ball rolled against his own net.

The Africans made it 2-0 before the Coloureds scored to make the half-time score 2-1.

*Baphinda futhi elesibili khona lapho, namaKhaladi nawo alithola elokuvula nelokugcina kwashinhwango2 - 1.*<sup>382</sup>

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<sup>377</sup> *Golden City Post*, July 17, 1955. In Alegi, *Laduma!*, 103.

<sup>378</sup> Jackie Dorasamy. 'Natal Africans Get Coach', *New Age*, July 25, 1955, 8.

<sup>379</sup> 'Amakhaladi naBantu Kusasa eCurrie's Fountain', *Ilanga Lase Natali*, July 16, 1955, 4. The Africans was P. Zulu, D. Kunene, G. Moeketsi, R. "The Doctor" Kinsey, D. Dhlomo, A. Mzimela, V. "Stadig my Kind" Makathini, M. "Nqaba Zulu" Ntshangase, E. Majola, T. Nkabinde, C. Khumalo and E. Bophela. It is said that Stadig got his name when he was a youngster and played a match against grown-ups who could not cope with his speed. The crowd urged him to slow down ("stadig") and the nickname stuck. In Alegi, *Laduma!*, 100. The Coloureds retained the team that lost narrowly to the Indians in the opening match: Captain and goalkeeper E. Grantham, A. Stolla, R. Grendon, P. Minnie, R. Dutlow, N. Starkey, B. Harvey, G. Ruipers, A. Aantjies, D. Davis, and J. Crowie. Reserves were D. Davies and J. Crowie.

<sup>380</sup> 'Soccer Fans Will Go Wild with Excitement', *Ilanga Lase Natali*, July 16, 1955, 20.

<sup>381</sup> 'Kalisekho Iphambili Kuwo', *Ilanga Lase Natali*, July 23, 1955, 4.

<sup>382</sup> 'Kalisekho Iphambili Kuwo', *Ilanga Lase Natali*, July 23, 1955, 4.

Unlike other contemporary newspapers, there is not much description of the goals or individual performances, not even when a goal was scored. In the second half, although the Coloureds started strongly, Africans scored the third goal to win 3-1.

The final was played at Currie's Fountain on 31 July 1955.<sup>383</sup> The preview of match in *The Graphic* anticipated that the majority of the crowd would be Africans and that the Africans being such fine dribblers, the Indians would have to man-mark them to stand any chance of winning. Attendance was growing each year and the 1955 final saw a record crowd of 25000 spectators jam-pack Curries Fountain. In his message before the match, Africans manager Zeph Dhlomo was quietly confident:

I am not saying much. My team will speak for itself in this year's great final. In the past the speed of the Indians has always got the better of us. We have learnt our lessons and with the assistance of our coach we hope to turn the tables in 1955.<sup>384</sup>

Dhlomo wishes came true and his team cruised to an easy 5-0 victory over the Indians to bag the 1955 Singh Trophy.

Reports described the match as 'fast and full of exciting moments' with the Africans outplaying their opponents in every department. The Indians, managed by E.I. Haffejee, played a fast paced game and gave of their utmost, but it was not enough. They failed to match the size, strength, and power of the Africans, whose halfbacks D. Dhlomo, H. Zuma, and C. Khumalo intercepted all the Indian moves. V. Makhathini and G. Moeketsi did not give Indians' defence 'time to breathe'. The first goal was scored in the 15<sup>th</sup> minute when the Africans outside-right 'pulled an out-going ball with a back-drive for Moeketsi to flash in a goal.' Centre half H. Zuma scored from 40 metres out to make it two nil.<sup>385</sup> Ntshangase made it three nil, while E. "Remember My Promise" Bophela scored four minutes before half-time. Ntshangase scored again after the break to make it five nil. *Ilanga* triumphantly described the situation:

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<sup>383</sup> The Indian team was V.C. Moodley, E. Mohammed, Bob Ganas (Captain), S. "Miller" Siva, K. Rajagopal, C.V Naidoo aka Tommy, N. Subramoney, S.P. "Boya" Govender, Bob Pillay, M.P. "Cousie" Govender, and Thiripath Naidoo. The African team was: M. "Nqaba Zulu" Ntshangase, G. "Ace of Trouble" Moeketsi, E. Bophela, D. "Robin Island" Kunene, V. "Stadig My Kind" Makhatini, D. "Ndaru" Dhlomo, R. "The Doctor" Kinsey, P. Zulu, C. Khumalo, A. Mzimela, E. Majola, P. Ntombela, H. Zuma and H. Matenjwa.

<sup>384</sup> 'African Applause vs Indian Murmurs', *The Graphic*, August 6, 1955, 6.

<sup>385</sup> 'African Applause vs Indian Murmurs', *The Graphic*, August 6, 1955, 6.



*Balishaya khona kunjalo elesihlanu nawo esebonakala ukuthi asefuna nje ukufihla ihlazo likaNathingi kodwa kwala kwagoqa, kwabonakala ukuthi aBantu bakhokhisa isibhongo seminyaka emibili eqholosha ngalengomishi yesikhulu sakubo.*

The Africans scored the fifth goal and one could see that the Indians were playing for a consolation goal but failed to the extent that one could observe that the Africans were paying revenge for the defeats suffered in the previous years of Indian dominance over this Trophy named after their Indian official.<sup>386</sup>

The Indian team, the paper added, ‘combined excellently but failed to discover the tactics of their opponents.’<sup>387</sup> African supporters outnumbered Indians in the stadium and each goal scored by the Africans ‘was received with deafening cheers from every corner of the field.’ After the match many fans went to the DDAFA offices to thank its President for the outstanding display. Most of the Africans players in the Natal team played for teams under the auspices of DDAFA, hence the “thank you” to the president from the soccer-loving public. The President encouraged the supporters to make financial donations so that he could reward the players. The 1955 tournament was a financial success for the NISB and each of the three units was paid a record dividend of £209 while the Board held half in reserve.<sup>388</sup>

The 1955 season ended with another match between composite non-racial Natal and Transvaal teams at Curries Fountain on 2 October. A reflection of the shifting balance of power in Natal is that there were six African players in the team.<sup>389</sup> Natal took revenge for their 1953 loss. As per adverts in newspapers, in view of the large crowd expected, tickets were sold in advance at Peter’s Lounge in Grey Street and a reception to honour the visiting Transvaal team was held at the YMCA in Durban, on 1 October. The match was described in local newspapers as being of an ‘exceedingly high standard’ as Natal ‘ripped through the

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<sup>386</sup> ‘EhlulwaKanzimaAmaNdiyaNgaBantu’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 6, 1955, 6.

<sup>387</sup> ‘Africans Bring Indians Down By 5-nil’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 6, 1955, 10.

<sup>388</sup> ‘Africans Bring Indians Down By 5-nil’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 6, 1955, 10.

<sup>389</sup> The Natal team, managed by Zeph Dhlomo and captained by Darius Dhlomo, comprised of vice-Captain E. Grantham in goals; Bob Ganas, P. Zulu, S. Siva, C. Khumalo, H. Zuma, D. Davis, N. Soobramoney, G. “Ace of Trouble” Moeketsi, and E. Grantham. There were six African players in the starting line-up. Reserves were V.C. Moodley, P. Minnie, D. Harvey, and E. Bophela. The Transvaal match-day squad comprised of Ronal David, Terence Thomas, Christian Black, David Julius, One-One, Moosa Ismail, G. Hlongwane, Harold Grower, Gerald Francis, Captain Links Padayachee, Korea, and Lakichand Singh. There were five Coloureds, three Indians, and two African players.

defence by demoralizing the visitors attack and cracked shots from all angles to demolish Transvaal by 5 goals to 1.<sup>390</sup>

Natal kicked-off the match with the breeze backing them from the race-course end. The Transvaal keeper was tested several times by the Natal forwards, “Ace” Moeketsi and H. Zuma. According to reports, the Transvaal forwards, D. Darius, “One-One”, and Moosawere were ineffective as they did not play as a unit. The Natal defence marshalled by Bob Ganas and P. Zulu dominated them. The first goal came in the 16<sup>th</sup> minute when Subramoney engineered a fine pass to Bophela who made it one nil to Natal. Soobramoney was again the spark when he passed to H. Zuma and the latter setup Bophela to complete his brace. Attacks from Transvalers, “Links” Padayachee and Korea were easily read by the Natal defence and a counter-attack resulted in Darius Dhlomo making the score 3-0 before the interval.

After half-time the Transvaal team came back strongly and was rewarded when outer right, S. Ngubane, scored with a powerful shot from 20 metres out. Natal was dominant ‘as they had speed, rhythm and fluency which had Transvaal baffled at every turn.’ Moeketsi and Bophela scored to make the final score five goals to one, with Bophela completing his hat-trick.<sup>391</sup> This demonstrated the dominance of Natal soccer at this time.

### **The Donges Declaration, 1956**

1956 was an important year for Black soccer in South Africa as Stephen Mokone and David Julius became South Africa’s first Black players to sign professional contracts with Coventry City in England and Sporting Lisbon in Portugal, respectively. Johannesburg-born Mokone, better known as “Kalamazoo” or “Black Meteor” in football circles, was reputedly the first Black player in Africa to sign a professional contract overseas. Almost all the newspapers reported on this “big news”. According to *Ilanga*:

Stephen Mokone ... will be sailing to England to join an English team and play as a professional footballer ... Stephen is unmarried and stays with his parents at Lady Selbourne in Pretoria ... His name became prominent in the highlights of soccer fame when he was in Natal and played for the Shooting Stars of Adams College in 1950.<sup>392</sup>

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<sup>390</sup> ‘Natal 5, Transvaal 1. Third Inter-Race Soccer, Speediest Seen to Date’, *The Graphic*, October 8, 1955, 11.

<sup>391</sup> ‘Natal 5, Transvaal 1. Third Inter-Race Soccer, Speediest Seen to Date’, *The Graphic*, October 8, 1955, 11.

<sup>392</sup> ‘African Footballer for Overseas’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, January 21, 1956, 4.

Mokone had a remarkable soccer journey. He played for Heracles Almelo in Holland, Cardiff City in Wales, Barcelona in Spain, Marseille in France, Torino in Italy, Valencia in Spain, and Sunshine George Cross in Australia. Often referred to as South Africa's best-ever export, Mokone, who schooled at Ohlange High, founded by *Ilanga* founder Langalibalele Dube in Inanda, Durban, has a street named after him in Amsterdam, Holland.<sup>393</sup>

1956 was important for another reason. The apartheid government, through T.E. Donges, its Minister of Interior, articulated its first apartheid sports policy. The "Donges Declaration" declared mixed-race sport illegal. The inter-race tournament challenged this ideology.

Another issue that concerned officials was the commitment of local players. In an interview with *The Graphic*, Q. Rooks, secretary of the NCSA, criticised players who did not honour their call-up to provincial inter-race matches. He cited Universals' players as "chief" culprits in this regard. According to Rooks, many players grumbled 'that they were not notified in time but this is a weak excuse as they know that the matches are held either on Saturdays or on Sundays.' He added that this 'disheartens those who look forward to a weekend of interesting matches only to be let down by bad sportsmanship of the rotten few.'<sup>394</sup> If Rooks' words are true and were not a means to absolve officials of any "blame" for the poor performance of the Coloured team, this suggests that this was truly an "amateur" era in terms of communication between players and administrators and the availability of players.

The opening fixture of the 1956 tournament featured the Coloureds against the Indians at the Stamford Hill Coloured Sports Ground on 10 June 1956. According to reports, both teams fielded their strongest sides.<sup>395</sup> A closer look at the teams shows that the Indian team, still smarting from their defeat at the hands of the Africans, brought in a number of new players. The match started at a sluggish pace until the individual brilliance of Natroon Soobramoney resulted in the Indians going ahead in the 15<sup>th</sup> minute. The Coloureds dominated in the second

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<sup>393</sup> "Soccer Greats. Kalamazoo: SA's soccer 'Maserati,'" accessed 10 September 2013, <http://www.southafrica.info/about/sport/greats/kalamazoo.htm>.

<sup>394</sup> 'Coloured Official Speaks Out', *The Graphic*, June 9, 1956, 9.

<sup>395</sup> The Coloured team was E. Grantham, L. Riley, D. Harvey (Captain), E. Donner, J. Jaffer (vice-captain), C. Delange, Jantjies, De Kock, Crowie P. Minnie, F. Egelhof, N. Starkey, and C. Nagel, while the manager was W. Lawler. The Indian team was V.C. Naidoo of Mayville, K. Rajagopal of Durban, Bob Ganas of Pietermaritzburg, Tommy Naidoo from the Durban Indian Sunday League (DISL), Siva Miller (Captain of Durban), Nad Odyar of County, T. Rampath of Pietermaritzburg, R. Pillay of South Coast, Natroon Soobramoney of Durban, S.G. Boya Govender and Thirpath Naidoo of South Coast. The substitutes were South Coast players Ebrahim Mahomed and Marie Pillay; Boyd Maistry of Durban; and M.P. Govender of Lower Tugela. The team manager was M.K. Naidoo.

half through their forwards F. de Kock and Miller, but the Indian backline of Bob Ganas and Rajgopal was like ‘a sedimentary rock’ and hard to crack. Against the run of play, Natroon scored his second goal, while B. Crowie scored a penalty to make the score 2-1 to the Coloureds. Natroon completed his hat trick before Eglehof scored for the Coloureds to make it 3-2, which was the final score. Man-of-the-Match Soobramoney’s heroics were praised. A black and white photograph of him scoring one of his goals appeared in the 16 June issue of *The Graphic* with the caption: ‘A dance with a difference: Natroon Soobramoney heads in another goal at the expense of L. Riley who misses widely. Grantham, the Coloured goalkeeper looks set for a saver but falls in the try.’<sup>396</sup>

The second match of the NISB tournament was played at Somtseu Road on 19 August 1956 between the Coloureds and Africans. Somtseu Road was used for inter-race matches after it was renovated in the mid-1950s. From being a ground with three fields and a little “sitting room”, the renovated sports arena had eight fields, with the main ground able to accommodate 15000 spectators, with raised banks, tiered seating for 6000 people, and a grandstand for 500 people. For the first time, most fans had a clear view of matches. It also had a fence around the playing area while a brick wall enclosed the main ground.<sup>397</sup> The Africans came into this match walking “tall” after their 5-0 triumph over the Indians in the Kajee Trophy for the national SASF tournament. The Coloureds, on the other hand, introduced four “new faces” to try to turn their fortunes around: goalkeeper R. Harper, centre-half E. Drane, and forwards R. Orendon and B. Campbell. This seemed to work as the Coloureds took the lead in the 15<sup>th</sup> minute through N. Steinbank. However, the Africans hit back immediately and equalised through M. Ntshangase. Steinbank scored from the restart to make the score 2-1 in favour of the Coloureds. The Africans did not take this lying down. Two quick goals from D. Kunene and V. Makhathini gave them a 3-2 lead. E. Bophela then ‘made a brilliant dribble; cut across two defenders pulled the ball back and biffed it into the net’ to make the score 4-2. A record five goals were scored in eight minutes ‘to the utter astonishment of the bewildered spectators’ who were witnessing a scene never before seen in this tournament.<sup>398</sup>

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<sup>396</sup> *The Graphic*, June 16, 1956, 12.

<sup>397</sup> Alegi, *Laduma!*, 90.

<sup>398</sup> ‘Record 12 Goals Registered: Coloureds Lose to Africans’, *The Graphic*, August 25, 1956, 7.

Two minutes after the break Kunene scored the Africans' fifth goal with a scorcher from 20 metres. From this point on the Africans 'started to indulge in individual showmanship of their artistry with the ball and took pot-shots and were skidding around on banana-skins of their own creation.'<sup>399</sup> They were doing what is known as "showboating" in today's soccer terminology. The Africans were set back when Steinbank completed his hat-trick and R. Grendon scored to make the score 5-4, but responded with three goals in the final minutes to make the final score 7-4. Kunene scored two of these goals. This encounter was described by fans and reporters as the 'best-ever match' in the history of competition. 'Not even the most optimistic African supporter would have taken odds on his team beating the Coloureds by such a big margin.'<sup>400</sup> Although they lost, the Coloureds put up an excellent performance.

The final game of the tournament was staged on 30 September 1956 at Somtseu Road. George Singh, secretary of NISB, released the advertising poster for the final two weeks before the match. Tickets were priced at 2/s for the open stands, while the "VIP" section in the main Pavilion cost an extra 1/s. The stadium, which held a capacity crowd of 15000, was sold out. African spectators were willing to spend on soccer, which was one of the main leisure activities in Durban, and soccer organisations raised substantial revenue from admission charges. Although African confidence was high, the match was hard-fought. The only new face in the Africans' team was S. Sibiyi, the Zulu Royals goalkeeper, who "came to the party" and played a blinder. The forward line of the Africans, made up of V. Makhathini, E. Bophela, and D. Dhlomo, ran the Indian defence, marshalled by Bob Ganas, ragged in the opening quarter. Bophela opened the scoring in the 15<sup>th</sup> minute but the Africans' celebrations were short-lived as Boya Govender equalised. Bophela scored again as the Africans went into a 2-1 lead. After the interval the Indians missed a number of chances before Govender 'drew the African goalkeeper off, dribbled past two backs and scored into the empty net for an equaliser.'<sup>401</sup> In an exciting final 20 minutes both sides had a number of chances before Bophela completed his hat trick to give the Africans a narrow 3-2 win in a hard fought encounter and retain the Singh Trophy.

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<sup>399</sup> 'Record 12 Goals Registered: Coloureds Lose to Africans', *The Graphic*, August 25, 1956, 7.

<sup>400</sup> 'Record 12 Goals Registered: Coloureds Lose to Africans', *The Graphic*, August 25, 1956, 7.

<sup>401</sup> 'Natal Africans Play Hard', *The Graphic*, October 6, 1956, 7.

## **NISB, 1957: a permanent shift in the balance of power?**

The names of the NISB's committee members were published for the first time by several newspapers in 1957. The minutes of AGMs and other NISB documentation are not available and newspapers and brochures are our main sources of information. The chief Patron in 1957 was G. Benjamin. A.F. Woods was elected president, with J.M. Sikhosana as vice-president and L.S. Govender the secretary. The Executive Council comprised of R. Dookran, M. Middleton, H.K. Nduli, A.F. Wood as convenor, and S.N. Reddy. The protest, misconduct and enquiry board comprised R. Dookran (convenor), C. Rajgopal, S.N. Reddy, N.S. Middleton, H.K. Nduli, and L.S. Moodley (secretary).

Sunday, 7 July 1957 was the date set for the NISB "match of the season" between the Indians and Africans who met at Somtseu Road. The key question on everyone's minds was whether the balance of power had shifted permanently or whether the Indians could make a comeback. The build-up was widely covered in *The Graphic* in its 29 June and 6 July issues. As a gesture of goodwill, the NISB decided not to charge extra admission fees for the chairs and the pavilion. Admission was on a strictly first come, first served basis and the crowd turned up from early in the morning to secure good seats. The match officials for the day were referee R. Richen, and linesmen O.K. Crewell and J. Starky of the NCFSA. The crowd exceeded the ground's capacity:

*Umdlalo obubukelwa yizibukeli zabantu bezizwe zonke ezicishe zibe ngaphezu kwezinkulungwane engingathi 25, 000.*<sup>402</sup>

The match was watched by more than 25 000 people of all racial groups.

*The Graphic's* report on the match summed it up: 'in a one-side match ... the Natal Africans soundly trounced Natal Indian eleven by scoring 7 goals as against the Indians paltry 2'.<sup>403</sup> *The Graphic* reported that the Indians started the match well but once the Africans scored, the combination of the Indians lost shape and their 'enthusiasm' dropped. The Indians' goalkeeper, Ford Naidoo was nevertheless a 'hero' as he prevented the score going into double digits. Naidoo replaced the iconic V.C. Moodley who was injured. The Africans opened the scoring in the in the 10<sup>th</sup> minute. *Ilanga* reported:

*Kuthe lapho zisuka nje lomdlalo aBantu bagcwala ngokushesha kumaNdiya, lapho sabona zibekwa nje, uSenzeni (P. Zulu) odlala emumva esedlala phambili ... wacusha-cusha nazo*

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<sup>402</sup> 'Bazihambe Nje ABantu Bedlala NamaNdiya eThekwini', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 13, 1957, 20.

<sup>403</sup> 'Africans Teach Indians Ball Lesson', *The Graphic*, July 13, 1957, 6.

*waze wathi esezongena ngaphakathi ku18 walibeka esikhaleni, lapho kuqhamuke uNqaba Zulu ngakwesokunxele ngomfutho omubi washaya intuthu yegoli.*<sup>404</sup>

Africans swiftly attacked the Indians especially Senzeni who plays at the back, but on the day was found forward on numerous occasions, who received the ball, passed in-between Indians and when he approached the 18-yard area, passed to Nqaba Zulu who made no mistake and scored a cracker goal.

S. Sivalingam, the Indians' centre forward, levelled the score before "Shordex" Zuma made it 2-1 for the Africans. Goals from Zuma and Chooki Nair took the score to 3-2 to the Africans at half-time.<sup>405</sup> The floodgates opened in the second half as the Africans scored four more times. Philemon "Arah, my Boy" Zulu scored the fourth and V. "Stadigmy kind" Makhathini the fifth goal after dribbling his way through the Indians' defence. *Ilanga* described this goal as follows:

*Ustadig ... ubedlala ngawo nje amaNdiya ... abeze azimele akhohlwe ukuthi azomenze njani ngoba elokhu ewayisa ngapha nangapha).*<sup>406</sup>

Stadig ... was a nemesis to Indians ... on some occasions they stood watching and wondered what to do with him because his displays were confusing them.

Darius "Ndaru" Dhlomo scored a brace to "bury" the Indians 7-2. In its summary, *The Graphic* reported: 'while the Africans played clean, constructive and scientific soccer, our boys wandered about wildly all over the field, each trying to head for the goals without much combination.'<sup>407</sup> Note the word 'our', which implies that thinking in racial terms was still alive and well.

In the next Singh Trophy match for 1957, the Coloureds played against the Indians at Stamford Hill on 4 August 1957. Still smarting from their defeat, the Indians had made a number of changes and were preparing for the Sam China Cup which was to be held in Cape Town from 24 August to mid-September. The NIFA selectors responded to criticism that Durban players received preference in official matches by selecting players from other centres. The two sides played attacking football and Chockie Nair opened the scoring for Indians in the 5<sup>th</sup> minute when he shot past E. Grantham. The Coloureds attacked but Indian

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<sup>404</sup> 'Bazihambe nje aBantu Bedlala namaNdiya eThekwini', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 13, 1957, 20.

<sup>405</sup> 'Bazihambe nje aBantu bedlala namaNdiya eThekwini', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 13, 1957, 20.

<sup>406</sup> 'Bazihambe nje aBantu bedlala namaNdiya eThekwini', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, July 13, 1957, 20.

<sup>407</sup> 'Africans Teach Indians Ball Lesson', *The Graphic*, July 13, 1957, 6.

defenders Miller and Rajoo held firm. The Indians went two up when B. Satgoor crossed for Chockie Nair to complete his brace in the 25<sup>th</sup> minute. The Coloureds, however, settled down and enjoyed the better of the match. E. Cooper dribbled past several defenders to make the score 2-1, before R. Grendon 'outstripped the defence and beat V.C. Moodley with a terrific shot to level the score at 2 all.'<sup>408</sup>

R. Rajgopal went off injured and Indians played with ten men as no substitutes were permitted. The Coloureds took advantage of their extra player and R. Grendon headed home their third goal from a corner and would have scored more were it not for V.C. Moodly's 'catlike agility, anticipation and safe handling, [which] not only thrilled the fans but kept the score down.'<sup>409</sup> But V. Dorley scored in the last minute to make the final score 4-2 in favour of the Coloureds. It was another sad day for the Indians who had to go back to the drawing board to come up with a new strategy. For the first time in a decade the Indians were not in contention for the trophy. They seemed to be a team in decline and *The Graphic* asked, 'What is happening to Indian Soccer These Days?'<sup>410</sup> This is reflected in the fact that at the Sam China Cup on 31 August 1957, Natal lost 9-2 to Western Province. The structure of Indian soccer came under scrutiny from the press and fans, and criticism came from all corners.

In the final of the 1957 tournament, played at the Somtseu Road grounds on 22 September between Africans and Coloureds, the Coloureds took an early 2-0 lead but could not withstand unremitting pressure from the Africans who eventually ran out the winners by five goals to four to clinch the trophy for the fourth consecutive year. By now, the team was playing a superior brand of soccer to Coloureds and Indians

### **1958: a record breaking year**

The Africans were determined to stamp their dominance over their rivals in the 1958 tournament. Curries Fountain was undergoing renovation at the time and was only ready for the final. The matches took place at Stamford Hill and Somtseu Road. One issue that arose was spectators' unhappiness that the NISB used white referees and linesmen to officiate their games. For example, Mdubane Elliot Ntsele of Lamontville wrote to *Ilanga*:

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<sup>408</sup> 'Africans Teach Indians Ball Lesson', *The Graphic*, July 13, 1957, 6.

<sup>409</sup> 'Africans Teach Indians Ball Lesson', *The Graphic*, July 13, 1957, 6.

<sup>410</sup> 'Coloureds Triumph', *The Graphic*, August 9, 1957, 10.



*Kuyadumaza ukubona ukuthi kunokuba siye phambili siya emuva ... abantu bakithi sebehlukile yini? Babedlalisa kanjani eminyakeni eyadlula? Uma abamaMhlophe bekwazi ukuzidlalisa bangaxabani kwalani kithina sizwe esiNsundu? Nisho ukuthi ngeke nimlande umuntu eMgungundlovu azodlalisa?*<sup>411</sup>

It is disappointing to see that instead of moving forward we are going backwards. Have our people failed? How were they officiating in the previous years? If White referees officiate their matches without quarrels what makes us fail as the African nation? Are you saying you cannot get referees from Pietermaritzburg?

Part of the motivation for using white officials was to prevent local fans regarding decisions as biased. During the 1950s, local soccer was marked by numerous instances of violence, including rioting and assaults on referees. Nevertheless, in a context of growing segregation and the rise of Pan Africanism, some saw the decision to rely on whites as perpetuating paternalism.

In the first week of May 1958, the NISB held its annual meeting to elect office bearers for the year and decide on fixtures, sub-committees, and dividends to affiliates, amongst other issues. Delegates resolved that the Board would sponsor a mixed race inter-race competition between Durban and Maritzburg, and invite Transvaal to play Natal on the same basis during the 1958 season. It was reported at this meeting that ‘after paying substantial annual dividends to its affiliated units, the Board realised that its assets exceed £1 000.’ Nkosi Albert Luthuli was re-elected patron and C.W. Nxumalo President. George Singh, A.F. Wood and I.J. Motholo were elected vice-Presidents. Singh, an NISB founding member, resigned as secretary-treasurer and was replaced by R. Lutchman. It is likely that Singh, a lawyer by profession, resigned as he was also the President of the SASF and a SAIFA official.<sup>412</sup> Lutchman announced that fixtures for 1958 would take place on 8 June, 3 August, and 11 September, with the matches played at Stamford Hill, Somtseu Ground, and Curries Fountain, respectively.

On 12 April 1958, the NAFA held its AGM in Vryheid, in the northern region of present-day KwaZulu-Natal. The fact that NAFA’s AGMs were held in places like Vryheid, Dundee, Ladysmith, Pietermaritzburg, in addition to Durban, demonstrates that soccer was popular

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<sup>411</sup> ‘Onompempe BabeLungu eMsizini?’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, January 11, 1958, 12.

<sup>412</sup> Linesman. ‘Natal Should Farewell in Inter-Race Soccer’, *The Leader*, May 9, 1958, 14.

throughout the province. The meeting witnessed a fierce battle for key positions, and after being president of the NAFA for eight consecutive years, I.J. Motholo was replaced by T.A. Nene of Pietermaritzburg. Motholo's deputy, A.M.S. Mhlongo, lost to Mr.Ndimande. H.M. Molefe was retained as secretary/treasurer along with his deputy, Jas Africa. The delegates to the NISB were H.M. Molefe, Gibson Mndaweni, and G. Nkwanyana.

The first NISB inter-race match of 1958 was between Coloureds and Indians at Stamford Hill on 8 June. The Coloured team was preparing for the national Middleton Trophy in Cape Town in July. It was reported that both teams had selected their strongest line-ups.<sup>413</sup> Conditions were difficult: 'a gusty wind that blew across the ground made conditions of play rather unpleasant as the ball had a tendency to sweep towards the Umngeni end with the flow of the wind.'<sup>414</sup> The match was consequently a disappointing one for fans. When the Coloureds did threaten, Miller stood his ground for the Indians:

*Ancenga amaNdiya abuya ezintini, efuna ukulishaya phakathi ... kodwa emva kwesikhashana kube sengathi ayacindezelwa amaNdiya ... u "Miller" wamaNdiya ebhokile emuva kungezi lutho.*<sup>415</sup>

Indians tested the Coloureds' goalposts for several goal attempts ... but after some time it seemed like the Indians were under pressure ... but "Miller", the Indian back, played tremendously well to prevent anything coming.

When the Coloureds did get past Miller the brilliance of Indian goalkeeper V.C. Moodley stopped them in their tracks. Moodley made many fine saves, including a penalty. The Coloureds did eventually score but C. Naidoo equalised for the Indians. "Bobby" was at the heart of all the Indians' attacks and initiated most of their moves (*Ebhokile u"Bobby", nguye obakhela amaNdiya amagoli*).<sup>416</sup> Just when it seemed that the match was headed for a draw, "Bobby" came to the party:

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<sup>413</sup> Coloureds' line-up: R. Harvey, N. Rooks, D. Harvey, L. Hamiel, C. de Lange, E. Cooner, G. Hippolite, C. Forby, G. de Lange, P. Minnie, S. Dutbow, V. Campbell and L. Davids. The Coloured team was dominated by players from Durban and Pietermaritzburg with two players from Kokstad. The Indian team was as follows: V.C. Moodley, Siva Miller, K. Rajagopaul, B. Kalika, B. Mohan, Gorpap Pillay, D. Mohan (Captain), N.S. Naidoo, Chokie Nair and S. Sivangadas, Thirpath Naidoo. Reserves: R. Govender "Bonzo", V. Govindansamy and S.P. "Boya" Govender. Manager: Charles M. Pillay.

<sup>414</sup> 'Coloureds Lose Narrowly', June 13, *The Graphic*, 1958, 11.

<sup>415</sup> 'Ehlulwa AmaKhaladi NgamaNdiya, ABantu Idraw NamaKhaladi', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, June 14, 1958, 12.

<sup>416</sup> 'Ehlulwa AmaKhaladi NgamaNdiya, ABantu Idraw NamaKhaladi', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, June 14, 1958, 12.

*Kuthe umdlalo usuzophela waphunyuka futhi u“Bobby” wagijima nalo walinika u-C. Naidoo nangempela walishaya phakathi elika 2 -1.*<sup>417</sup>

When the match neared an end Bobby zigzagged between the African players, ran with the ball and passed to C. Naidoo who bagged the goal home; 2-1.

*Ilanga* singled out the Coloureds’ numbers 4, 7, and 8, who were not named, as being outstanding with the former kicking tremendous corner kicks (*uNo. 7 eshaya amakhona amangalisayo*).<sup>418</sup> *The Leader* named V.C. Moodley, Siva Miller, V. Govindasamy, K. Rajagopaul, Chokie Nair and D. Mohan as “outstanding” for the Indian side.<sup>419</sup> The Indians bagged a narrow 2-1 win but post-match reports were very critical of the team for lacking team spirit. According to *The Graphic*, ‘those who are chosen on their merits invariable indulge in showmanship rather than producing team-spirit and it is here that some concerted efforts should be made to build up a workmanlike team to serve the province.’<sup>420</sup> “Province”, as used here, meant the Natal “Indian” team.

On 3 August 1958, the Africans battled the Coloureds at Somtseu Road. The match was said to have attracted the interest of ‘two scouts from Europe’.<sup>421</sup> Seeking to avenge their loss in the previous year’s final, the Coloureds were missing several players after a car accident when the team was returning from the Middleton Competition in Cape Town left several injured.<sup>422</sup> *The Leader* reported that the Coloureds ‘lost two of their players in the tragic accident ... that shook the entire South African soccer world’.<sup>423</sup> Fortunately, most of the key players had not travelled to Cape Town because they were denied leave by their employers. This is an example of the kind of humiliation Black South Africans were subjected to as well as the ways in which Black sport was retarded. White sportsmen were the “pride” of the nation and would be given months off for sports tours.

*Abadlali abaningi nabaphambili babengaphumelelanga ukuhamba ngalelilanga lengozi... babengayitholanga imvume yokushiya imisebenzi bayodlala.*<sup>424</sup>

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<sup>417</sup> ‘Ehlulwa AmaKhaladi NgamaNdiya, ABantu Idraw NamaKhaladi’, *IlangaLaseNatali*, June 14, 1958, 12.

<sup>418</sup> ‘Ehlulwa AmaKhaladi NgamaNdiya, ABantu Idraw NamaKhaladi’, *IlangaLaseNatali*, June 14, 1958, 12.

<sup>419</sup> Linesman. ‘Indians Scrape Home Against Coloureds’, *The Leader*, June 13, 12.

<sup>420</sup> ‘Coloureds Lose Narrowly’, *The Graphic*, June 13, 1958, 11.

<sup>421</sup> ‘Coloureds vs. Africans on Sunday. A Grand Match is Expected’, *The Leader*, August 1, 1958, 16.

<sup>422</sup> In its August 1, 1958 issue, *The Leader* published only the Africans’ line-up. The African team comprised of H. Zuma (captain), V. Makatini, E. Bophela, D. Khoza, D. Dhloomo, A. Mzimela, P. Zulu, P.L. Zulu, T. Nkabinde, L. Mdungo and A. Sibiyi. The manager was I.J. Motholo.

<sup>423</sup> ‘Coloureds vs. Africans on Sunday. A Grand Match is Expected’, *The Leader*, August 1, 1958, 16.

<sup>424</sup> ‘Uthi kenqeni lutho uMn. Rooks wamaKhaladi’, *IlangaLaseNatali*, August 2, 1958, 12.

The Coloureds came with a weak team as many of their players, including their top players, did not travel to Cape Town as they were denied permission from their respective employers.

Taking a leaf from the Africans, the Coloureds also employed a white coach, a certain Mr. Hamilton. The Coloureds stunned the Africans when they took the lead through Starkey but “Remember My Promise” Bophela equalised for the Africans who then went ahead in fine form:

*Leli lesibili elishaywe nguDarius belisuka kuShordex [H. Zuma] walibeka kuRemember [E. Bophela], yena walishayela phambili layoconsela ngasezintini kanti uDarius uselapha, walicobelela phakathi ngekhandu kwaba sengathi wunyazi.*<sup>425</sup>

The second goal scored by Darius was a pass received from “Shordex” [E. Zuma] to “Remember” [E. Bophela] who kicked a forward pass to the Indians’ goal which met Darius Dhlomo who knocked the ball with his head; it seemed like lightning.

In a match described by Rayraj, *The Leader* sports columnist, as ‘real vintage stuff’ and a ‘real David and Goliath affair’ the two teams displayed a level of soccer that led Rayraj to remark that there was no ‘denying the fact that this was the finest exhibition that we have seen between two superbly fit teams for many years.’ This transformation was attributed to ‘expert’ coaching.<sup>426</sup> Minutes before half time, G. Sithole added a third goal for the Africans. Although the Coloureds had several chances in the second half, “Remember” completed his brace, scoring the Africans’ fourth goal. In the ‘most glorious twenty minutes of the match’ the Coloureds scored through Starkey and Josephs to make the final score 4-3.<sup>427</sup> Only the brilliance of the African keeper, affectionately known as “Washada”, which in Zulu literally means ‘you got married’, prevented the Coloureds from equalising. Harvey, the Coloured shotstopper was also reported to have made brilliant saves, especially in the first half.

The NISB organised a match for the official re-opening of Curries Fountain, the “headquarters” of inter-race matches since 1946. The local press described Curries as ‘the first international stadium for non-Whites in South Africa’.<sup>428</sup> The stadium was officially re-

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<sup>425</sup> ‘Ahlulwa AmaKhaladi NgaBantu ngo 4-3, AmaNdiya Ehlulwa ngo 6-0’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 9, 1958, 13.

<sup>426</sup> Rayraj. ‘It was a Titanic Struggle’, *The Leader*, August 8, 1958, 12.

<sup>427</sup> Rayraj. ‘It was a Titanic Struggle’, *The Leader*, August 8, 1958, 12.

<sup>428</sup> Rayraj. ‘Natal-Transvaal Inter-race Teams Meet at Curries Fountain. 20, 000 Expected at Stadium Opening’,

opened on 24 August 1958 in a match between combined (non-racial) Natal and Transvaal teams. *Ilanga* described the match as an ‘epoch-making event in Natal’s soccer history.’<sup>429</sup> Seating capacity was increased and the “new” stadium had embankments, ablution blocks, showers, a tea room, servants’ quarters, and a new playing surface. The Rev. B.L.E. Sigamoney, founding member of the NISB, attended the opening ceremony.

*Ilanga* reported that the Natal team fielded the cream of the crop of its players in a match watched by more than 10 000 spectators of all races.<sup>430</sup> The stadium was scheduled to be opened by the Mayor of Durban, Councillor H.W. Jackson, but the sudden death of Prime Minister, J.G. Strijdom forced Jackson to cancel at the last minute. The death of Strijdom had an impact on attendance as a crowd of 20000 was expected.<sup>431</sup> Miscommunication led to an incorrect mid-afternoon radio announcement that the match had been postponed.<sup>432</sup> *The Leader* reported that, despite the ‘shade of the man’s [Strijdom] political opinion, all were moved by the sad news’ of Strijdom’s death.<sup>433</sup> While the match went ahead, the opening ceremony was postponed to 7 September when the Indians played the Africans for the Singh Trophy. Transvaal won a one-sided match, opening the scoring in the 10<sup>th</sup> minute.

*Ngemizuzwana nje eyishumi umdlalo uqalile, akhwishiza kabi amaforward aseTransvaal, ezicushela nje kuNatal okuphumelela khona lapho iforward u-Oliver Adams washaya intuthu angazange ayibone nokuyibona ugoalkeeper weNatal weNdiya uV.C. Moodley).*<sup>434</sup>

Ten minutes into the opening half the Transvaal forwards moved swiftly between the Natal players which led to a thunderbolt shot from Oliver Adams that the keeper of Indian descent, V.C. Moodley, did not even see.

It is interesting that in this “non-racial” match, the report should refer to the race of the goalkeeper.

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*The Leader*, August 22, 1958, 16.

<sup>429</sup> ‘Combined Natal IX to Play TvI. At Opening of Curries Fountain’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 23, 1958, 12.

<sup>430</sup> The team managed by I.J. Mtholo featured six players of African descent in the starting line-up: E. Bophela, A. Luthuli, P. Zulu, V. Makatini, A. Masamala, and the captain Darius Dhlomo. Other players who featured were two Indians V.C. Moodley and D. Mohan whilst the Coloureds were L. Grantham, D. Harvey and R. Dutlow (vice-captain). The reserves were R. Harvey, Bob Pillay and Siva Miller.

<sup>431</sup> Rayraj. ‘Natal-Transvaal Inter-race Teams Meet at Curries Fountain. 20, 000 Expected at Stadium Opening’, *The Leader*, August 22, 1958, 16.

<sup>432</sup> Rayraj. ‘Transvaal Romp Home 6 - 1’, *The Leader*, August 29, 1958, 16.

<sup>433</sup> Joe Francis. ‘Sports Corner: Sadness Sweeps Currie’s’, *The Leader*, August 29, 1958, 16.

<sup>434</sup> ‘Yehlulwe Kabi ngo 6-1 iNatal Ngomdlalo Oshisayo Ihlulwa YiTransvaal’, *IlangaLaseNatali*, August 30, 1958, 13.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> minute, Transvaal doubled its lead through A. Thangwa. In the second half, D. Dhlomo's "showboating" received countless cheers from the fans but came to naught. Goals from V. Sithole, Thangwa again, H. Crowder, and L. Singh made the final score 6-1.<sup>435</sup> This was a reality check for Natal soccer.

The final Singh Trophy competition match was played at Curries Fountain on 7 September 1958 between Indians and Africans. The match attracted great interest because it was the official 'opening of Curries Fountain' by the Mayor of Durban, Councillor H.W. Jackson, a 'renowned sportsman in his time who represented Natal in rugby on 53 occasions.'<sup>436</sup> For some inexplicable reason, *Ilanga* published the Indian line-up but not the African team.<sup>437</sup>

The Africans confirmed their dominance with a narrow 2-1 narrow win over the Indians. This was described as a "lucky" victory. The Indians took the lead when Bob Pillay headed home the first goal of the match and would have extended their lead 'if lady luck had smiled on them' as Pillay missed several 'sitter' chances.<sup>438</sup> E. Bophela equalised for the Africans on the stroke of half-time. The second half saw the play moving from end to end before Makathini scored the winner, allowing Africans to again defend the Singh Trophy. *The Leader* reporters called Makathini "Short Tax" as opposed to "Shordex" which was the name mostly used by *The Graphic*, *New Age* and *Ilanga*.

### **1959: the Indians are back!**

The NISB held its customary AGM over the last weekend of April 1959. There were no changes: C.W. Nxumalo and R. Lutchman were re-elected to the positions of president and secretary/ treasurer respectively and Nkosi Luthuli was again elected the patron. The previous year, 1958, was described as a boon financial year for the NISB which paid a record £234 in dividends to each affiliate, while the Board's assets stood at £1284, 9s, 5d.<sup>439</sup> R. Lutchman, NISB secretary, said:

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<sup>435</sup> Yehlulwe Kabi ngo 6-1 iNatal Ngomdlalo Oshisayo Ihlulwa YiTransvaal', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 30, 1958, 13.

<sup>436</sup> Joe Francis. 'Great Match at Currie's Fountain Opening', *The Leader*, September 30, 1958, 16.

<sup>437</sup> The Natal Indian line-up: V.C. Moodley, Naka Moon, Vasseey Govindsamy, B. Mohan, S. Miller, G. Naidoo, Bala Chinnsamy, D. Mohana, Bob Pillay, J. Sievalingamdas, Triphah Naidoo, M. Ebrahim, S. Marrie and T. Jamalooden.

<sup>438</sup> Joe Francis. 'Great Match at Currie's Fountain Opening', *The Leader*, September 30, 1958, 16.

<sup>439</sup> 'Inter-race Board', *The Leader*, May 1, 1959, 14.

1958 must be regarded as a record-breaking year. Unprecedented crowds witnessed the three annual matches. The new Curries Fountain Stadium was opened with the playing of the final ... I may mention that the Natal Indians and the Natal Coloureds have shown marked improvement in their standard of play and I have no doubt that we will witness some very exciting matches this year.<sup>440</sup>

The NISB inter-race tournament returned to its original home in 1959. The newly-revamped Curries Fountain ground hosted all the matches, the first of which took place between the Indians and Coloureds on 7 June. Officials announced that the gate-takings would be donated to the Natal Flood Relief Fund. The May 1959 flood, when the Umzimkulu River burst its banks, resulted in more than 50 deaths, hundreds of thousands of pound in damage to property, the destruction of communication networks and other vital services, and extensive loss of agricultural crops.<sup>441</sup> The NIFA organised a match between Southern and Northern Natal on 31 May 1959 to raise money for the relief fund. The advertisements for this match give the NISB's address as 100 Grey Street, Durban. This is revealing because the NIC and trades unions were also located in the area; it points to the close links between sport and politics, and between sports administrators and political activists.

Both the Indians and Coloureds fielded their best teams which saw a number of new faces.<sup>442</sup> Prior to the match, the visiting English first division team, Bolton Wanderers, who were guests of honour, were introduced to the players and the 10000-strong crowd. Ironically, Bolton was in the country to play against the all-white Natal and South African teams. Bolton captain Nat Lofthouse, a football legend, and the team coach, addressed the crowd before the match. Ronnie Govender interviewed Lofthouse at half-time. When he asked him about the standard of play Lofthouse said that he was particularly impressed with Bob Pillay, Jamalooden, Rampath, and P. Minnie: "I think the standard of play is very good, especially taking into the fact that these boys didn't receive much coaching."<sup>443</sup> He thanked the

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<sup>440</sup> 'Inter-race Board', *The Leader*, May 1, 1959, 14.

<sup>441</sup> See B.S. Young, 'Floods in Natal', *Weather*, 15.3 (1960): 92–97.

<sup>442</sup> Indian provincial selectors Kista Naidoo, M. Naidoo, and S.K. Naidoo selected the following team: S.K. Naidoo (coach), V.C. Moodley, S. Marse, V. Govindsamy, Nakka Moon, Bob Pillay, T. Rampath, B. Mohan, BalaChinsamy, D. Mohan (captain), Thirpath Naidoo and Teddy Jamalooden. Substitutes: E. Ebrahim, Sagren Naidoo, Strini Moodley. This was a new look team. The African team published in the 5 September 1958 issue of *The Leader* (it published both line-ups) was N. Sibiya, T. Nkadhini, W. Mdunge, A. Mzimela, P. Zulu, A. Luthuli, H. Zuma, V. Makathini, E. Bophela, D. Khoza and D. Dhlomo (Captain).

<sup>443</sup> Ronnie Govender. 'Ronnie Govender has a Chat and Finds Nat a "Great Guy"', *The Leader*, June 12, 1959, 16.

organisers for inviting them and wished both teams the best for the inter-race series. Many in the crowd sought the autographs of Wanderers' players at half-time and after the match. Roy Parry, a Bolton legend, was singled out for special attention.

Ronnie Govender, a schoolteacher and later an award winning playwright, was, at this time, a well-acclaimed, 'no-nonsense' and respected sports journalist with *The Leader*. His reputation was underscored by letters sent to the newspaper. V.D. Padayachee of Durban wrote:

My purpose in writing this letter is to congratulate you on your excellent sports section. I enjoy your lively, thought provoking columns and I am sure they are doing our community a world of good, especially Ronnie Govender's crusade against "limelight grabbers". Congrats and keep up the good work.<sup>444</sup>

But some "warned" him about his advice. "No-hater" wrote:

Brotherly advice is not the same as taking instructions from a coach. It prevents one from plunging headlong into an impending catastrophe. So mark my words. Of late, I have noticed that you seem to be wielding your profile pen in pouring forth venom on the unfortunate victims of your attack – the poor officials who happen to make a slip of their tongue. That gives you enough ammunition to vent your feelings so here is where I would like to offer you advice. Beware of the mishandling of ammunition otherwise it will explode and do you a lot of harm. Therefore keep out of the hate line in sports – rather be its lifeline and offer it the goodly guidance it deserves to anchor itself on.<sup>445</sup>

In defence of Govender, the Sports Editor replied: 'Ronnie says he loves people, all people ... that is why he offers such STRONG advice.'

Govender offered strong criticism of nepotism, corrupt officials and inter-race sports and irked many officials in the process. This is taken up in the following chapter.

The Indian-Coloureds match ended in a 5-1 victory for the Indians who came up against the Africans in the next match watched by an estimated crowd of 14000.<sup>446</sup> Their confidence

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<sup>444</sup> V.D. Padayachee. 'Congratulations', *The Leader*, June 19, 1959, 14.

<sup>445</sup> No-hater. 'Venom', *The Leader*, June 19, 1959, 14.

<sup>446</sup> 'Coloureds Put Up Game Fight. Indian Side Scores Wizard Win', *The Leader*, June 12, 1959, 15.



high, the Indians opened the scoring as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> minute but the Coloureds' inner-left, B. Crowie, equalised in the 12<sup>th</sup> minute. The Indians dominated the rest of the match. A ground shot by Bob Pillay, after receiving a pass from Dharam Mohan, made the score 2-1. Jamalooden scored a third goal for the Indians before half-time. The Coloureds threw everything into the attack after half time but Homiel and Singh in the Indian defence held their own against Coloureds' forwards, N. Starkey and G. Landsberry. Jamalooden scored the fourth goal with 13 minutes to play before Bob Pillay put the cherry on the top to score his second goal, and the Indians' fifth for a 5-1 victory. *The Leader* summed it up: 'Yes, the Coloureds did match the speed of the Indians, but they didn't match the Indians for top-class combination, exceptional ball control and sheer soccer wizardry.'<sup>447</sup> When Govender asked Nxumalo, the President of NISB, what he thought of the Indians, he replied: 'The Indians are a very much improved side. But the real test lies ahead with the Africans.'<sup>448</sup>

The Coloureds had an opportunity to redeem themselves against the Africans on 5 July. There was much at stake. The Coloureds were "wounded lions" after being trounced by the Indians while the Africans wanted to emphasise their dominance. The Africans missed the services of star left-winger, Dairus Dhlobo, who had signed a contract with a club in Holland but they still fielded a very strong team with many familiar faces.<sup>449</sup> The team, coached by Jas Africa of DDAFA, scored just before half-time.

*Kuthe lapho sekuzoshintshwa sekusele umzuzu owodwa walibamba uChris Sono ... waligenda kancane waseqhulula imbumbulu walala phansi wabangwa nothuli unozinti wamaKhaladi).*<sup>450</sup>

A minute before the end of the first half Chris Sono lifted the ball from the surface with his foot and struck a thunderbolt shot that the Coloured keeper did not see.

P. Zulu made it 2-0 for the Africans in the 60<sup>th</sup> minute. Sono was the dominant player:

*UChris Sono khona izikhathi lapho bethi bamnikela ibhola alisikaze angalithinti afane aleqe lithathwe omunye wangakubo ... kuhlokome inkundla.*<sup>451</sup>

<sup>447</sup> 'Coloureds Put Up Game Fight. Indian Side Scores Wizard Win', *The Leader*, June 12, 1959, 15.

<sup>448</sup> Ronnie Govender. 'Soccer Talk ...', *The Leader*, June 12, 1959, 16.

<sup>449</sup> Africans: H. Cele, J. Ndlovu, T. Nkabinde, P. Zulu, P.E. Zulu, A. Mzimela, D. Khoza, V. Makhathini, K. Gama, C. Sono, and J. Ndaba. The manager was J. Afrika. This team had both seasoned campaigners and new recruits. Coloureds: D. Easthorpe, E. Dunn, A. Taylor, H. Johannes (captain), C. de Lange, P. Minnie, B. Crowie. C. de Lange, L. Hippolite, E. Richards and C. Dorlly. On the bench were H. Appolos, A. Oakes, and E. Abrahams.

<sup>450</sup> 'Ubushisa Umdlalo WaBantu NamaKhaladi. Baphumelele Ngobuciko Abantu Ngo 3 – 0 KuMakhaladi', *Ilanga*, July 18, 1959, 12.

Chris Sono played a superb game and on numerous occasions tricked the Coloureds by pretending to kick the ball but let it go past him to another teammate; his displays amused the crowd.

K. Gama, the Africans' inner-left, struck a pile driver from 30 metres to make the final score 3-0. The Coloureds appear to have put up a good fight; *The Graphic* reporter stated that they were 'in superb form and displayed much improved and scintillating soccer but "Lady Luck" was against them.'<sup>452</sup>

The NISB organised another friendly on 12 July 1959 between a composite Natal team and Western Province. This was the first time that the two teams had met. On 11 June Western Province met Maritzburg and the following day they played the Natal IX.<sup>453</sup> For unknown reasons, the results of these matches were not published.

The 1959 final took place on 2 August between the Indians and Africans. *The Leader* called it 'a soccer bonanza'.<sup>454</sup> Expectations and confidence were high as both teams came into the final having trounced the Coloureds. *Ilanga* regarded the Africans as the underdogs because the Indians had beaten the Coloureds by a higher margin; the Africans, in the paper's opinion, lacked 'proper combinations'; the match was played at the Indians' home ground; and the Africans had to 'deal with the swift passes of dashing Indian forwards'.<sup>455</sup> The Indian team, captained by T. Rampath, introduced four new players, meaning that the team that beat the Coloureds had changed considerably.<sup>456</sup> The stage was set for a grand match and 20000 people witnessed one of the greatest ever matches at Curries Fountain. The match generated £1 904 which was a national record for a "Black" association. Guest of honour, golfing idol

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<sup>451</sup> 'Ubushisa Umdlalo WaBantu NamaKhaladi. Baphumelele Ngobuciko Abantu Ngo 3 – 0 KuMakhaladi', *Ilanga*, July 18, 1959, 12.

<sup>452</sup> 'My! What Big Juniors' *The Graphic*, 10 July 1959, 11.

<sup>453</sup> The Natal team were D. Mohan, T. Jamalooden, Ronnie Singh, Dan Naidoo and Lionel Hamel of NIFA; Petrus Zulu, Teford Nkabinde, J. Mthembu, Philemon Zulu, F. Nkosi, Vusi Makhathini and A. Hlatshwayo of NAFA; C. de Lange, P. Minnie and R. Harvey of NCFA. The Western Province only featured one African Player: B. Nkanke. The comprised of: V. Julies, J. Arendse, H. Hector, J. Francis, C. Maggott, L. van Dierman (vice-captain), D. Oliviera (captain), J. Mentoer, P. Fisher, B. Jansen and H. Moses.

<sup>454</sup> Ronnie Govender. 'This is a Soccer Bonanza', *The Leader*, July 31, 1959, 16.

<sup>455</sup> 'Big Inter-race Soccer Match. Indian XI Favoured for Singh Trophy', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 1, 1959, 9.

<sup>456</sup> Indians: Dan Naidoo, Lionel Homiel, Sam Pillay, B. Mohan, Ronnie Singh, Strini Moodley, Nukka Moon, D. Mohan, Bob Pillay, Captain T. Rampath, and T. Jamalooden. Reserves: Gengan Naidoo, Sagren Naidoo, and Bala Naidoo. Africans: Henry "Black Cat" Cele, J. Ndhlovu, T. Nkabinde, P. "Arah My Son" Zulu, Petros "Senzeni" Zulu, Albert "Ali Baba" Mzimela, D. "Nduna" Khoza, V. "Stadig" Makathini, K. Gama, E. "Remember My Promise" Bophela, M. Mhlongo and C. "Thimlela" Sono.

“Papwa” Sewgolum, was welcomed with thunderous applause from the audience, and signed golf balls and autographs before the start of the match.<sup>457</sup>

The match was played at a ‘furious’ pace. The Africans made the initial attacks but Indian defenders Sam Pillay and Lionel Homiel held firm. As was expected of this dribbling wizard, who had exceptional pace, Strini Moodley was in spectacular form. He passed to D. Mohan for the opening goal; 1-0 to the Indians.

*AmaNdiya abevutha ngempela ... kwaba engathi abadlali baBantu bayayiqabuka lento okuthiwa ibhola*<sup>458</sup>

The Indian outmatched the Africans ... as if the Africans were not familiar with the thing called football.

The Indians attacked ceaselessly and it was only Cele’s brilliant goalkeeping that kept the Africans in the match. The second goal for the Indians came from the boot of Dharam Mohan after Strini Moodley collected a pass from Moon and raced down the right flank before passing it to Mohan. *Ilanga* reported that only “Stadig my Kind” and “Nduna kaNdaba” played well for the Africans in the first half. With the breeze at their backs in the second half, the Africans ‘began to enjoy territorial advantage coupled with vigorous play’ and it was no surprise when K. Gama dribbled past several players and passed to Sono who made it 2-1.<sup>459</sup> The Africans continued to attack but Bob Pillay killed their hopes of equalising when he scored with an electrifying shot from a Strini Moodley cross. Further goals from Bob Pillay and Dharam Mohan made it 5-1 to the Indians. After five defeats, the Indians were once again champions. C.W. Nxumalo, NISB president, presented the trophy to Indians captain T. Rampath. According to *Ilanga*:

*aBantu bebengenawo neze umdlalo, amaNdiya wona evuthiwe ngempela futhi kakaze abenawo umdlalo ofana nalona.*<sup>460</sup>

The Africans were outplayed by Indians; who played superbly like never before.

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<sup>457</sup> Sewsunker “Papwa” Sewgolum was a famous golfer of Indian origin. Born in Natal in 1930 he made sporting history in the late 1950s when he beat 103 white golfers in the Natal Open at Durban in 1963 and beat Gary Player to win the title for the second time in 1965. Papwa also won the Dutch Open in 1959, 1960 and 1964. He also won numerous “Black” golfing championships in South Africa.

<sup>458</sup> ‘Ayithathile Nonyaka Indebe AmaNdiya. Abehlule Adlalala Ngabo aBantu Ngebhola 5 -1’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 15, 1959, 12.

<sup>459</sup> ‘S.A Record Set for Gate Taking’, *The Graphic*, August 7, 1959, 5.

<sup>460</sup> ‘Ayithathile Nonyaka Indebe AmaNdiya. Abehlule Adlalala Ngabo aBantu Ngebhola 5 -1,’ *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 15 1959, 12.

The blame for the defeat was laid at the feet of the selectors. After the Natal Africans beat Basutoland in the 1959 Moroka-Baloyi Trophy, O.K. Joe, sports columnist for *Ilanga's* English section, wrote: 'if only the selectors and those responsible for running the game (in Natal) would take full stock of their work, it would be discovered that Natal would have won the Singh Trophy and the match against Transvaal as there was absolutely nothing wrong with Natal soccer.'<sup>461</sup> Joe viewed the defeat as the worst drubbing he had ever seen given to an African side.<sup>462</sup> He felt that the selectors should "take the swipe" for letting thousands of supporters down by taking the Indians as "small fish".<sup>463</sup> Many fans criticised forwards Vusi Makhathini and Chris Sono for being "dead" and mediocre. Others questioned the omission of certain players:

*Ngasohlangothini lwaBantu kube khona izikhalo kwisikimu, besingagculisi neze ... abantu bebhala ngoHambanje kaSokesimbone noRemember my Promise ... bese bethi sengathi labo abakhetha abadlali bangaba neso elibuka kahle esikhathini esizayo.*<sup>464</sup>

On the Africans side people complained about the unsatisfactory selection ... people lamented the side lining of "Hambanje" of Sokesimbone FC and "Remember my Promise" ... they said that the selectors must be eagle-eyed in their selections in future.

Soccer being a national sport, Joe felt that the selection committee had a "public duty" to the African community; he sent them this strong message:

As servants of the soccer fraternity, they should see that they satisfy the paying public in their dealings. Such an outcry as there is at present about the selection of players for the last match is no compliment on the work that officials are supposed to be doing.<sup>465</sup>

In the immediate aftermath of the 1959 Inter-Race tournament, there were murmurings about putting an end to inter-race soccer and introducing professional soccer. Ronnie Govender reported in *The Leader* that George Singh had personally told him that SAIFA 'should be centralised in Natal, because here we have scores of seasonal, well balanced and reasonable administrators who have proved their worth. Responsible administrators should put their organisation before their own personal aspirations of holding positions.'<sup>466</sup> Singh was

<sup>461</sup> O.K. Joe. 'Natal XI Shows Top Form Against Basutoland IX', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, September 5, 1959, 10.

<sup>462</sup> O.K. Joe. 'Selectors Blamed For Natal Soccer Defeat', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 15, 1959, 10.

<sup>463</sup> O.K. Joe. 'Selectors Blamed For Natal Soccer Defeat', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 15, 1959, 10.

<sup>464</sup> 'Ayithathile Nonyaka Indebe AmaNdiya. Abehlule Adlala Ngabo aBantu Ngebhola 5 -1,' *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 15 1959, 12.

<sup>465</sup> O.K. Joe. 'Selectors Blamed For Natal Soccer Defeat', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 15, 1959, 10.

<sup>466</sup> Ronnie Govender. 'Keep Out of Soccer Pavadai', *The Leader*, May 15, 1959, 15.

commenting on the proposed move by some SAIFA affiliates to rotate the organisation's headquarters every two years instead of it being 'centralised'. The SAIFA was due to hold its biennial AGM on 30 May 1959. One of those proposing this move was Bob Pavadai, the first President of the South African Cricket Board of Control (SACBOC). Govender described Pavadai as 'not a very welcome man in Indian soccer circles' because he seemed 'bent on smothering' the move by SAIFA to allow other races to participate in the Sam China Tournament.<sup>467</sup> In an open letter to SAIFA, Govender wrote:

Actually I should have started by saying ... there are no South African Indians. But that would have been childish and unrealistic wouldn't it? ... I will suggest that you endorse what your more progressive affiliates are clamouring for at the moment – throw open your doors wholeheartedly to other races. Your top officials have often –and most laudably–preached the gospel of the oneness of man – here is a chance to practice that you preach ... you can make the grand gesture by throwing open the Sam China Tourney in Natal this year to all races. Yours integrationally, Ronnie Govender.<sup>468</sup>

The clamour for non-racial soccer grew louder in 1960.

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<sup>467</sup> Ronnie Govender. 'Keep Out of Soccer Pavadai', *The Leader*, May 15, 1959, 15.

<sup>468</sup> Ronnie Govender. 'An Open Letter to SAIFA,' *The Leader*, May 29, 1959, 16.

## Chapter Six

### “Wind of Change”: From Multiracialism to Non-Racialism, 1960

On 3 February 1960, the then British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan delivered his renowned “Wind of Change” speech at the South African Parliament in Cape Town:

The wind of change is blowing through this continent [Africa] and, whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must all accept it as a fact, and our national policies must take account of it.... As I see it, the great issue in this second half of the twentieth century is whether the ... great experiments of self-government that are now being made in Asia and Africa, especially within the Commonwealth, prove so successful, and by their example so compelling, that the balance will come down in favour of freedom and order and justice?<sup>469</sup>

The speech brought hope to African nationalists across the continent and in South Africa as it seemed to signal a change in attitude towards the apartheid regime. Macmillan acknowledged that Africans were justifiably claiming the right to rule themselves, and suggested that it was the responsibility of the British government to promote the creation of societies in which the rights of all individuals were upheld.<sup>470</sup>

This “wind of change” was also evident on the sports fields and in boardrooms. O.K. Joe, the *Ilanga* English section sports columnist, hinted that whilst the speech was a “password” in political circles the “wind of change” was a symbol of hope as it was ‘beginning to blow in the non-White sports world’.<sup>471</sup>

At the time that Macmillan was delivering his speech, thousands of anti-colonial fighters, including Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, were languishing in prison. Aside from Macmillan’s speech, 1960 was witness to the massacre at Sharpeville in March, ANC president Chief Albert Luthuli’s call for the burning of passes, the banning of the ANC and PAC, the declaration of a State of Emergency by the government, and the detention of thousands of

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<sup>469</sup> ‘Wind of Change Speech’. accessed 12 September 2013, <http://www.sahistory.org.za/wind-change-speech>.

<sup>470</sup> Alistair Boddy-Evans. ‘Wind of Change Speech’. Made by Harold Macmillan to the South African Parliament in 1960,’ accessed 12 September 2013, [http://africanhistory.about.com/od/eraindependence/a/wind\\_of\\_change1.htm](http://africanhistory.about.com/od/eraindependence/a/wind_of_change1.htm), accessed 12 September 2013.

<sup>471</sup> O.K. Joe. ““Wind of Change” helps to Crush Racial Barriers in Non-European Sports’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, June 11, 1960, 10.

activists without trial for five months from March to September. Pondoland was caught up in armed resistance, passes were introduced for African women, Nigeria obtained independence, Indians celebrated their centenary in South Africa, and Patrice Lumumba was arrested in the Congo (DRC). Developments on the sports fields must be viewed in this context of heightened political activity on the one hand and state repression on the other.

### **Change is in the air: professional non-racial soccer mooted**

In the aftermath of the 1959 inter-race tournament, there was much talk of non-racial and professional soccer in Natal. At its 23<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Conference in Durban over the first weekend of June 1959, SAIFA ‘opened its doors to all races’ and stipulated that as from the date of the decision ‘any non-Indians will be able to play for any Indian Football Club’ in the country.<sup>472</sup> The delegates unanimously decided against affiliation to the white-run FASA. George Singh was elected president, Louis Nelson vice-President, S.P. Bobby Naidoo treasurer, and S.K. Chetty secretary.<sup>473</sup>

The NISB was at the forefront of the move towards non-racial professional soccer and it was initially suggested that professional soccer should be played under its aegis. The NISB convened a meeting at Durban’s Delhi Restaurant on 10 October 1959 to discuss the issue. Prior to this meeting, the Southern Natal Indian FA (SAIFA) had recommended that a professional body called the Natal Football League (NFL) be established and that it initially be limited to Natal with two teams from Northern Natal and four from Southern Natal.<sup>474</sup> This was partly prompted by the formation of the white National Football League (1959) in June 1959. Many journalists, soccer fans, and administrators began to ask, as *Drum* magazine did in August 1959: ‘Why shouldn’t WE start our own professional inter-racial Soccer league? We’ve asked this question the past few weeks and, from clubmen and sports officials, the answer every time has been, “Yes, let’s try”.’<sup>475</sup>

The meeting at the Delhi Restaurant was attended by representatives of the Coloured, Indian and African football associations. George Singh, the then secretary of SASF, criticised the poor turn-out of Africans and Coloureds at some of the inter-race matches due to the fact that the DDAFA continued with its fixtures whilst the inter-race tournament was taking place. He

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<sup>472</sup> ‘SAIFA Opens Its Doors To All Races’, *Indian Opinion*, June 5, 1959, 6.

<sup>473</sup> ‘SAIFA Opens Its Doors To All Races’, *Indian Opinion*, June 5, 1959, 6.

<sup>474</sup> Rajendra Chetty. ‘Poor African Support for Inter-Race Soccer Criticised’ *The Graphic*, October 16, 1959, 10.

<sup>475</sup> In Alegi, *Laduma!*, 118.

called for an end to this “unprincipled” practice. The NISB agreed to donate £100 to the South African Sports Association (SASA) which resulted in the respective affiliates sacrificing their profits. Singh stated that the ‘whole question of abolishing the colour bar will be discussed at the annual general meeting.’ He paid tribute to the sterling work of R. Lutchman, NISB secretary, describing him as a ‘worthy successor’ and ‘an even better one’ than himself and complemented Black-owned newspapers for their coverage of inter-race games, co-operating with non-racial sports associations and promoting non-racial sports. The meeting also passed a message of condolences to the family of Nxumalo, the Board’s president, who had died shortly before the meeting. Singh was appointed acting president until a new one was elected at the next AGM.<sup>476</sup>

Lutchman was vocal in his criticism of racialised soccer. He branded South African soccer, the national sport of the Black masses, the most “racialist” sport. It ‘has not moved an inch towards integration except merely for resolutions,’ Lutchman lamented. ‘It is time we did away with inter-race boards for as long as soccer is played as it is now there is no future ... soccer is indeed the most racist sport.’<sup>477</sup> Even *Ilanga* lamented that South African Black soccer had not moved towards non-racialism except for ineffective boardroom decisions.<sup>478</sup> One of the prime drivers of non-racial soccer was Lutchman, about whom Ronnie Govender wrote:

Ramhori Lutchman was a smallish, dapper insurance and estate agent who had set himself up in a tiny little office in Grey Street. He had a mischievous but gentle smile, but in the boardrooms he was a feisty combatant. His dream was non-racial football. He had risen through the ranks as a minor official, beginning as the secretary of the Mayville Football Association. Sathie [Ronnie Govender] was convinced that Lutchman was the man to bring about the transformation that would change the face of South African sport. It was a tough call. People get set in their ways. They had been playing like this for decades and there were other pressing concerns. Political activists and leaders were being increasingly banned and house-arrested. A power drunk Special Branch was moving in on the most innocuous signs of dissent.<sup>479</sup>

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<sup>476</sup> Rajendra Chetty. ‘Poor African Support for Inter-Race Soccer Criticised’ *The Graphic*, October 16, 1959, 10.

<sup>477</sup> Rajendra Chetty. ‘Most Racist Sport is Soccer’, *The Graphic*, October 16, 1959, 10.

<sup>478</sup> ‘Racialism in non-White Soccer – Officials View’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, October 24, 1959, 10.

<sup>479</sup> Ronnie Govender, *In the Manure. Memories and reflections*. (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2008), 139.



Lutchman was not the first person to publicly pronounce that inter-race soccer in Natal should be 'buried'. V.R. Noel, another NISB official, who had long called for an end to inter-race games, reiterated his message at this meeting. He said that while SASA was trying to break the colour bar, the NISB was doing nothing to give practical effect to this drive and called for the immediate integration of soccer.<sup>480</sup> Various officials supported this position.

The Delhi Restaurant meeting was not a meeting of the NISB; it was primarily organised to discuss the formation of a non-racial professional league. Lutchman supported the introduction of professional soccer and suggested that NISB was the proper authority to handle the matter in Natal. He lamented the fact that 'thousands of non-Whites, particularly Indians, support the Whites who have introduced professional soccer and if we do not give the lead then players are bound to support somebody else interested in catering for professional soccer.'<sup>481</sup> Lutchman continued to lobby for non-racial soccer in Natal. At a trophy presentation of the Lower South Coast Football Association of Umzinto, a month after the Delhi Restaurant meeting, he praised the Association for the removal of racial barriers in sports as early as 1949. Umzinto stayed out of Natal soccer when the NIFA introduced racial barriers. But since 'both Natal and SA Indian FA have thrown open their doors to all races, I am glad Umzinto is seeking affiliation to Natal.'<sup>482</sup>

"Racial" football, it seems, was skating on thin ice but the official curtain had not yet come down.

At the suggestion of H. Fernando of the NCFSA, a five-person committee was appointed to investigate the feasibility of professional non-racial soccer. Lutchman was appointed convenor with Charles M. Pillay, T.A. Nene, M. Matholo, and H. Fernando making up the rest of the committee. In an emotional speech, Matholo said that while some delegates frowned upon professional soccer, African players 'want something put in their palms and our clubs have been importing players from other Provinces and towns and have been secretly passing money over to them in order to maintain their services.' He felt that the practice of paying players was common and that the battle against amateur soccer was lost; therefore, "let us go ahead and accommodate professional soccer for it is already there."

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<sup>480</sup> Rajendra Chetty. 'Poor African Support for Inter-Race Soccer Criticised', *The Graphic*, October 16, 1959, 10.

<sup>481</sup> Rajendra Chetty. 'Most Racialist Sport is Soccer', *The Graphic*, October 16, 1959, 10.

<sup>482</sup> 'Umzinto Originated Non-racial Soccer', *The Graphic*, November 20, 1959, 11.

Matholo's "call a spade-a-spade" personality did not go down well with NAFA leaders, who were reportedly sceptical about professional soccer.<sup>483</sup>

Charles M. Pillay, NIFA President, urged co-operation from all of the Board's substructures in order to make professional soccer feasible. There were strong differences within the NISB, with NAFA, except for Matholo, sceptical, whilst the Coloured and Indian associations favoured the "new move". D.W. Isaacs of the Durban Coloured Football Association held that the NISB was merely passing the buck, when Molefe of the NAFA suggested that the matter be referred to the SASF. Isaacs asserted that this would delay the process by a year. No definite decisions were taken at the Delhi Restaurant meeting and Rajendra Chetty, sports reporter from *The Graphic*, felt that the NISB was unlikely to introduce professional soccer because of members' vested interests. However, failure to do so would be going against the national trend:

The impression I gained at the special meeting last week was that quite a few folks were against it. I had originally decided to take the Board to task but have now left the matter in abeyance till next week. Just in case the officials are thinking of evading the issue. I would like to warn them that provincial arrangements have already been made for a professional league and for obvious reasons I am withholding the names of those involved. If nothing happens within the next month, I will let you into the secret. Meanwhile I have promised the people concerned to keep the silence.<sup>484</sup>

Chetty asked readers to air their views on the issue of professional soccer through letters to his paper. It certainly appears that he was privy to developments behind the scenes and was pursuing his own agenda.

The NIFA convened a special meeting at the Lotus Club on 10 January 1960 to discuss professional soccer. Motivating for professional soccer, Lutchman, the convenor of the meeting, said that SAIFA:

... had achieved nothing in the fight for international recognition and in welding the races into one group ... The SASF is in the same position as when it started except for pious

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<sup>483</sup> Rajendra Chetty. 'Most Racialist Sport is Soccer', *The Graphic*, October 16, 1959, 10.

<sup>484</sup> Rajendra Chetty. 'Professional Soccer Seems Unlikely', *The Graphic*, October 16, 1959, 11.

resolutions and lip service. We have not yet succeeded in smashing down the barriers of racial compartments except for ‘throwing open the doors’.<sup>485</sup>

NAFA held a special meeting to discuss professional soccer in Durban in February 1960. It resolved to introduce professional soccer and decided that each team should register 16 players who were to be paid £2 10s per month each. These players, by virtue of joining the ‘professional ranks’, were barred from playing for their respective associations.

*Kwavela futhi nencwadi eyathunyelwa yiNatal Indian Football Association ivuma ukuba liqalwe ibhola elikhokhela imali, kwavela futhi nokuthi usoseshini wamaKhaladi aseNatal uyayivuma lenhlobo yebhola ngomlomo.*<sup>486</sup>

A letter was sent by the Natal Indian Football Association agreeing to professional soccer. It also appeared that the Natal Coloureds were verbally agreeing to this kind of soccer.

While these discussions were going on, it was announced that a new professional league, the Natal Soccer League (NSL) had been formed. In mid-May 1960, the NSL was publicly initiated to conduct professional soccer in Natal. In response to the NISB’s hesitation on this issue, City Promotions, a boxing and wrestling promotion body, took the initiative. At the inaugural meeting it was agreed to commence professional matches with eight non-racial teams, each of which had to pay an affiliation fee of £550.<sup>487</sup> The “soccer code” of the league stated that players should be compensated for their services as the practice of gate takings swelling the bank balances of individuals and administrators was unfair. The NSL “cabinet” consisted of five directors, namely, A. Razak Sarkhot as Chairman, Bobby Kade as Deputy Chairman, G.H.D. Seedat, Rajendra Chetty as secretary, and K.R. Govender as treasurer. The NSL applied to the Durban Indian Sports Ground Association (DISGA) for the use of Curries Fountain.<sup>488</sup>

However, this permission was not forthcoming and the first NSL match was scheduled to be played in Clairwood on 11 June 1960 between the Afro-Asian Dynamos and Coastal United. The match was to have been staged the previous week but was postponed as the ground was

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<sup>485</sup> ‘NIFA Unanimous on Professional Soccer. Inter-Race Board to Form Natal Soccer League’, *The Leader*, January 22, 1960, 16.

<sup>486</sup> ‘Uthini uNatal A.F.A. Ngebhola Lemali Na?’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, February 13, 1960, 12.

<sup>487</sup> ‘Pro. Soccer is Launched’, *The Graphic*, May 18, 1960, 12.

<sup>488</sup> ‘Pro. Soccer is Launched’, *The Graphic*, May 18, 1960, 12.

being used for an Indian festival. Aside from the non-availability of Currie's Fountain, another problem that the NSL faced was that it was not affiliated to either the NISB or SASF because 'to intertwine professional soccer with amateur code would not be to the best advantage of the game and for this purpose the affairs of NSL were conducted independently.'<sup>489</sup> The NSL intended to apply to the South African Sports Association for recognition. After all the speculation, debate, and controversy, the first professional soccer experiment failed. It was reported that fewer than 3 000 spectators turned up for the inaugural match and that Coastal United failed to field a team.<sup>490</sup> The disappointed spectators were refunded their monies.

At the NIFA AGM in March 1960, George Singh stated that he 'could not see professional soccer being introduced' in 1960 because the NISB sub-committee had not produced a blueprint, raising the ire of Lutchman, convenor of the NISB subcommittee on professional soccer. Lutchman, whom *The Leader* referred to as a 'quiet-spoken' person, responded with a 'torrid attack' on Singh which was said to be 'certain to spark off one of the biggest rows in sport.'<sup>491</sup> Lutchman claimed that Singh's statement had no basis:

Unfortunately, the committee had to work through and break down the legacy of 'racial' soccer in the Board handed over by our so-called soccer chief, Mr. George Singh. During the 12 years as its secretary and secretary of SASF he has not even moved a resolution asking for the abolition of racial soccer and I think in fairness to the Board, he should be the last person to criticise an honest and sincere effort of the majority of the members of all units to bring about integration. Mr. George Singh, while making repeated promises to various sporting organisations and the press to make clear his reasons for opposing professional soccer has, sad to say, let the soccer world down.<sup>492</sup>

Two, interlinked developments took place. The first was the attempt to form a non-racial professional league and the second was to put a stop to inter-race soccer matches. Ronnie Govender was the most vocal journalist against soccer played along racial lines. He published a number of critiques in his weekly sports column in *The Leader*. In April 1960 he stated: 'now is the time ... We've just had our feel of sham talk and false promises from our sporting

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<sup>489</sup> 'Professional Soccer Makes Debut', *The Graphic*, June 10, 1960, 12.

<sup>490</sup> O.K Joe. 'Professional Soccer Fails to "take-off" in Durban', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, 17 June 1960, 10.

<sup>491</sup> 'Professional Soccer Row is Brewing', *The Leader*, March 18, 1960, 16.

<sup>492</sup> 'Professional Soccer Row is Brewing', *The Leader*, March 18, 1960, 16.

bigwigs about the abolition of race divisions in sport.’<sup>493</sup> Govender pointed out that the NISB and SASF were continuing to stage inter-race matches despite criticism:

It should be clear by now that these matches have taken on the temper of a hot head. Let’s quit flirting with disaster and make a sincere effort to forge racial amity in sport. To make a start, let’s scrap the Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board. NOW.... Every time one race group plays another, everyone from the players to the spectators are acutely aware that they are sitting on the keg of dynamite. How often have I seen these kegs reach explosion point? It is miraculous that there have been no fearsome “incidents” as yet. But we cannot keep willfully setting these kegs and then hope for the best. There cannot be any real argument at this stage to carry on with racial divisions in sport. The latest popular argument that the race groups were not willing to cooperate has been torn to shreds since the Indian organisations have thrown open their doors to all races. Africans and Coloureds in increasing numbers are not playing for their associations. In fact, one Indian association, the Lower South Coast Football Association, can now boast of having an African official, Mr. C. Mtimkhulu, who is its vice-President. <sup>494</sup>

Govender proposed a ‘solution’ to the racial matches:

After the scrapping off the Inter-Race Board, how are we to set about lifting the race barriers? My plan, which some may call bold and revolutionary, is to set-up a completely non-racial provincial body with people who are really interested in dealing away with racialism to administer.<sup>495</sup>

He singled out George Singh, H. Fernando, L. de Vos, R. Lutchman, Charles. M. Pillay, S.L. Singh, Molefe, C. Rajgopal, T.A. Nene and Jeffrey Nyakana because they ‘have time and again spoken vociferously in support of complete integration in soccer.’ Let us cut off, he concluded, ‘the speaker and have some action’ because the time for procrastination was over.<sup>496</sup>

While these issues were being debated, the inter-race tournament under the banner of the NISB went ahead as scheduled for 1960.

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<sup>493</sup> Ronnie Govender. ‘Scrap the Inter-Race Soccer Board Now’, *The Leader*, April 8, 1960, 12.

<sup>494</sup> Ronnie Govender. ‘Scrap the Inter-Race Soccer Board Now’, *The Leader*, April 8, 1960, 12.

<sup>495</sup> Ronnie Govender. ‘Scrap the Inter-Race Soccer Board Now’, *The Leader*, April 8, 1960, 12.

<sup>496</sup> Ronnie Govender. ‘Scrap the Inter-Race Soccer Board Now’, *The Leader*, April 8, 1960, 12.

## **NISB Tournament, 1960**

The 1960 soccer season was an eventful one, not only because of the usual frantic annual calendar, but also because of this ground-breaking pronouncement by Chetty. The push for non-racial professional soccer and South Africa's FIFA membership topped the soccer agenda. NAFA held its AGM in Ladysmith on 10 April. The meeting reiterated that Africans were not ready to play professional soccer. T.A. Nene was re-elected president, with G.A. Nkwanyana as vice-president, H.M. Molife as secretary and treasurer, and James Africa as his deputy. Delegates to the NISB were H.K. Nduli, Eric Mseleku and G. Kubheka.<sup>497</sup>

The NISB held its AGM in May 1960. This meeting was eagerly awaited as talk was doing the rounds that the NISB was to discuss professionalism and the removal of "Inter-Race" from the Board's name. A.T. Nene was re-appointed president; and. George Singh, L. De Vos and G.A. Nkwanyana were deputy-presidents. S.K. Chetty was nominated for the position of secretary / treasurer but declined and A. Vengan, President of NIFA, was elected to the "deserted" portfolio.<sup>498</sup> Nkosi Luthuli remained patron. The question of professionalism was discussed at great length and the five-person committee was asked to continue its investigation into the matter. The meeting came to a 'disappointing end when the discussion of the two most important issues fizzled out and ended in no definite action being taken.'<sup>499</sup> The issue of professionalism was postponed because of the "unpreparedness" of Natal Africans and Coloureds to take a decision on the issue while the 'notices of motion dealing with the doing away with racialism were deferred for discussion at a future date.'<sup>500</sup> The motion calling for the abolition of the "inter-race" tournament and its replacement by regional non-racial matches was postponed to allow it to be circulated to the various units.<sup>501</sup>

While the question of professional soccer was being debated, the 1960 NISB tournament went ahead as scheduled. In the first game, the 1959 champions, the Indians, met their Coloured counterparts at Currie's Fountain on 29 May. The Indians were in high spirits as some of their players, who played for Northern Natal, had won the coveted Sam China Trophy for the first time in their history, defeating Southern Natal in the final. The starting line-up featured six players from Northern Natal and five from the south, reflecting the Indian

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<sup>497</sup> 'Umphumela Woketho KuNAFA', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, April 16, 1960, 10.

<sup>498</sup> 'Soccer Talks Fizzle Out', *The Leader*, May 6, 1960, 11.

<sup>499</sup> 'Soccer Talks Fizzle Out', *The Leader*, May 6, 1960, 11.

<sup>500</sup> 'Soccer Talks Fizzle Out', *The Leader*, May 6, 1960, 11.

<sup>501</sup> 'Soccer Talks Fizzle Out', *The Leader*, May 6, 1960, 11.

population's shift to the north of the province.<sup>502</sup>The Indians dominated the match and had several chances, including a penalty which Jamalodeen shot wide. According to *The Graphic* the Coloureds made the most of the missed opportunity and in the 25<sup>th</sup> minute N. Ogle's cross found L. Sharpley who headed home.<sup>503</sup>*The Leader* reported that 'Sharpley blasted home a cross from Richards' after Jamalodeen failed to convert a penalty at the other end.<sup>504</sup> Sharpley again found the net from an Ogle cross. According to reports, they seemed to communicate telepathically and were a marvel to watch. The Indians missed a second penalty, the culprit this time being Dharam Mohan. The midfield Coloured trio, Wheatley, De Lange, and E. Ebrahims, dominated the first half. Bob Pillay's goal for the Indians was ruled offside before Dharam Mohan scored to make the half time score 2-1.

The tension was palpable: 'With the score at 2-1 at half-time in favour of the Coloureds, ripples of excitement grew wider and wider and, at that stage, it needed a referee with great presence of mind to handle the second half.'<sup>505</sup> The referee was reported to be 'confused' on several occasions. In one instance he ruled a free kick for the Coloureds after initially signalling that the Indians had scored. Dharam Mohan then had a goal disallowed but captain Ronnie Singh then beat the 'keeper with a rocket propelled shot' to level the score at 2-2.<sup>506</sup> The referee's indecision prompted fraying tempers. Jamalodeen made amends for his penalty miss when, after drawing the Coloureds' keeper, he slotted the ball home for a narrow 3-2 Indians win. Dharam Mohan's displays stamped him as the most resourceful and constructive player for the Indians. He was unquestionably their best player and was carried off the ground by spectators after the game. He and Lionel Homiel, who stood head and shoulders above the others in the Indians' defence, would achieve cult status as amongst the finest soccer players this country has produced.<sup>507</sup> More than 15000 people watched the match which, according to O.K. Joe, was a 'spine-chiller and at times had the several thousand fans roaring their

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<sup>502</sup> Indians: Dan Naidoo, Sam Pillay, Lionel Hamiel, Nukka Moon, Ronnie Singh (Captain), B Mohan, D. Mohan, Strini Moodley, Bob Pillay, S. Lall and T. Jamalooden. Coloureds: D. Desplace, E. Dunn, S. McTavish, M. Wheatley, C. de Lange, E. Abrahams, G. Francis, D. Biggar, B. Crowie (Captain), L. Sharpley and C. Richards. Reserves were: C. Nelson and N. Ogle.

<sup>503</sup> 'Natal Coloureds Great Heroic Fight', *The Graphic*, June 3, 1960, 12.

<sup>504</sup> 'Coloureds Shock Indians and Go Down Fighting', *The Leader*, June 3, 1960, 12.

<sup>505</sup> O.K. Joe. 'Wind of Change Helps to Crush Racial Barriers in Non-European Sports', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, June 11, 1960, 10.

<sup>506</sup> 'Coloureds Shock Indians and Go Down Fighting', *The Leader*, June 3, 1960, 12.

<sup>507</sup> 'Natal Coloureds Great Heroic Fight', *The Graphic*, June 3, 1960, p. 12.

heads off.’<sup>508</sup> Ronnie Singh was admired for his leadership role as he “fed” his forwards ‘like a doting father moons over spoilt children.’<sup>509</sup>

The Coloureds, who had never won the Singh Trophy, gave their best-ever performance in the tournament: ‘Their composition and standard of play was an improved factor in this tournament and their forwards were brilliantly fast but their finishing left much to be desired, especially in the second half, and this proved costly.’<sup>510</sup> Despite winning, the Indians were disappointing given the high expectations going into the match. *The Leader* summed it up: ‘Whatever else it might have been it was a clear after 80 excruciating minutes, every second of which was crammed with torrid, nerve-cracking excitement, that seldom has such a match been seen at this Mecca of non-White sport.’<sup>511</sup>

In view of the tremendous interest in the match, the NISB organised a return “friendly” between the Coloureds and Indians on 19 June at Curries Fountain. In view of the large crowd that had attended the previous encounter, R.S. Govender, secretary of DISGA, told reporters that his team would open the gates well before the commencement of the match to avoid congestion. The Indians named a full strength team,<sup>512</sup> although a team called Aces from the South Coast prevented its players from participating in inter-race games due to problems between administrators. The withdrawal of some players did not, however, dampen the enthusiasm of the 8000 fans who attended the match which lived up to expectations as the Coloureds were determined to shed the tag of “whipping boys”.

The match kicked-off at a frenetic pace as both sides attacked but it was the Indians who found their goal scoring touches first when Bob Pillay struck the first goal from a free-kick after Bala Chinsamy was fouled at the edge of the box. Further goals from Chinsamy and Pillay made the score 3-0. The Coloureds’ neat, short-passing game, was attractive and paid off as goals from B. Crowie and a 40-yard shot by E. Abrahams made the score 3-2 at half-time. In the second half both sides fought for supremacy but the brilliance of the Indians’

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<sup>508</sup> O.K. Joe. ‘Wind of Change Helps to Crush Racial Barriers in Non-European Sports’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, June 11, 1960, 10.

<sup>509</sup> ‘Coloureds Shock Indians and Go Down Fighting’, *The Leader*, June 3, 1960, 12.

<sup>510</sup> ‘Natal Coloureds Great Heroic Fight’, *The Graphic*, June 3, 1960, 12.

<sup>511</sup> ‘Coloureds Shock Indians and Go Down Fighting’, *The Leader*, June 3, 1960, 12.

<sup>512</sup> Indian match-day squad: Dan Naidoo, Sam Pillay, Lionel Homiel, Baboo Moola, Balraj Mohan, Nukka Moon, Dharam Mohan, Strinnee Moodley, Bob Pillay, J. Sivangadess, Teddy Jamalodeen, Bala Chinsamy, and K. Mariemudoo.



goalkeeper, Singaravaloo, saved his team from conceding an equaliser. Pillay scored two more goals while L. Sharply scored a brace for the Coloureds to make the final score 5-4 in favour of the Indians. *The Leader* reported that Pillay's fourth goal was scored in style: 'working through a melee with brilliant control, Bob Pillay outplayed numerous defenders and once more from a difficult angle shot perfectly to complete his hat-trick.'<sup>513</sup>

As far as the Indians were concerned, this match settled bragging rights.

### **Africans and Indians: the match that never took place**

The Inter-Race Soccer Tournament took a back step to allow the SASF's biennial tournament for the Kajee Trophy to take place. The first match between the SA Indians and SA Africans, the 1958 Kajee Trophy winners and defending champions, took place at Curries Fountain on 3 July 1960. Natal Africans were represented by stalwarts such as Petrus "Senzeni" Zulu, E. Mbuli, and Eliakim "Remember" Bophela. There was much criticism of the Indian team which was deemed not to be "national" as only one player from the Transvaal was included. Natal Indians in the SA Indians team were Nukka Moon, Bala Chinsamy, Balray Mohan, Dharam Mohan, Thiri Rampath, Bob Pillay, T. Jamalodeen, Links Padayachee, and Eddie Govender. There was much anticipation. *The Leader*, in an article titled, "What the critics say" published the views of prominent sports journalists from other newspapers. Obed Kunene of *Ilanga* wrote that the clash of the traditional rivals was to be 'by any stretch of imagination the match of the year ... While Africans are making a determined effort to retain their colours, Indians have shown considerable improvement in their standard of soccer and chances are they will recapture the trophy.'<sup>514</sup>

Freelance journalist, Rajendra Chetty, wrote that 'the weak link is probably Eddie Govender in the goals and if Links Padayachee and Terrence Thomas are still growing great, there is no need to doubt the capabilities of the Indian side.'<sup>515</sup> Not surprisingly, George Mahabeer of the Transvaal based *Golden City Post* took a different view: 'I feel it will be a mediocre match and the gates should fall below expectations. It is surprising to know that only one Johannesburg player is in the team. It is more or less a match between the SA Indians and

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<sup>513</sup> 'Goalkeeping and Goal-getting Won the Day', *The Leader*, June 24, 1960, 16.

<sup>514</sup> 'What the Critics Say', *The Leader*, July 1, 1960, 12.

<sup>515</sup> 'What the Critics Say', *The Leader*, July 1, 1960, 12.

Durban and District.’<sup>516</sup> Ronnie Govender of *The Leader* was doubtful of the ability of Africans’ keeper: ‘The only thing I’m looking forward in this match is how that agile African keeper Fish Neku, sizes up to that brilliant centre-forward, Bob Pillay. I believe Neku, for once, will have met his master and if the absence of African selection we have at hand is correct, of his able defenders, he is going to run into a lot of trouble.’<sup>517</sup>

Members of the public were aggrieved by the hefty price of tickets for the match. One fan, Johnny Evans, of May Street in Durban told *The Leader* that he had been ‘a soccer fan for countless number of years’, but when he received a handbill advertising the SASF match he was ‘surprised to see the admission for adults in 3s plus 2s for the stand. The SASF are asking for a bit too much now, as a vast number of Indians, Coloureds and Africans are unemployed, and if prices of admission keep increasing I am sure the attendance figures will drop.’<sup>518</sup>

D-Day arrived. People from all over Natal attended the match. Cars bearing registration numbers from as far afield as Ladysmith, Ixopo, Port Shepstone, Zululand, and even the Transvaal were parked outside the stadium. However, the match was cancelled at the last minute without any prior announcement. Spectators were merely greeted by a notice outside the ground informing them that the match had been cancelled. No reasons were given, although the inclement weather and persistent rain had made the field soggy. This is how *The Graphic* described the reaction:

There was near riotous behaviour.... Extensive damage to the buildings at Curries Fountain was done by the angry crowd.... There were thousands congregated at the entrance of the ground. One of the gates was opened and there was easy access to the field and a large number of people strolled into the ground.<sup>519</sup>

This happened around 14h30 as supporters were waiting to enter the ground. Many were not aware that the game had been called-off. Newspaper reports suggests that the fans felt that the ground was in playable condition as another match had been played there earlier in the day

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<sup>516</sup> ‘What the Critics Say’, *The Leader*, July 1, 1960, 12.

<sup>517</sup> ‘What the Critics Say’, *The Leader*, July 1, 1960, 12.

<sup>518</sup> ‘A Bit Too Much’, *The Leader*, July 18, 1960, 11.

<sup>519</sup> ‘Angry scenes at Curries Fountain’, *The Graphic*, July 8, 1960, 12.

and there was no indication of more rain.<sup>520</sup> The absence of officials to explain the situation further infuriated the spectators. According to reports, ‘one visiting soccer fan gave vent to his feeling by hurling a brick at a window and others joined him and pandemonium broke loose.’ Within minutes more damage was inflicted as windows were stoned and broken, ‘wire guards were twisted, asbestos partitions kicked down and fire tank fittings in the ticket box were damaged.’ The arrival of the police further angered the fans who tried to burn the wooden gate.<sup>521</sup>

Ronnie Govender defended the SASF’s decision to postpone the match. He described the supporters as ‘creatures without reason’ who resorted to the ‘law of the jungle’, were ‘ruthless, senseless and wanton’, ‘filled with hate’ and ‘who hate themselves.’<sup>522</sup> He chided the fans for destroying property that the SASF was still paying for: ‘[We] had no alternative but to postpone the match after we were informed by the Weather Bureau that the weather was uncertain and that there was every likelihood of a further downpour.’<sup>523</sup> However, the fans were furious. One who wrote under the pseudonym “Disgusted” from Stanger, on the north coast of Natal, wrote:

The reason advanced was that it was raining, but surely an important sporting event such as this one should not be so helplessly dependent on the vagaries of the weather. In any event, if it was a heavy or continuous downpour, the postponement of the match might have had the semblance of reasonable plausibility, but all we had on Sunday was a little drizzle, which, if anything would have made conditions for such a tough encounter all the better.<sup>524</sup>

Another “Disappointed Soccer Fan” reflected the mood of anger:

Sir – I wonder if anyone could possibly give me an explanation as to the cancellation of the Federation match... It was an excellent day to play and the ground was in a perfect condition-... Is sport in South Africa solely promoted for the sole reason of making extra

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<sup>520</sup> ‘Angry scenes at Curries Fountain’, *The Graphic*, July 8, 1960, 12.

<sup>521</sup> ‘Angry scenes at Curries Fountain’, *The Graphic*, July 8, 1960, 12.

<sup>522</sup> Ronnie Govender. ‘And We Call Ourselves Sportsmen! – Not After Sunday’s Insanity’, *The Leader*, July, 8, 1960, 12.

<sup>523</sup> Ronnie Govender. ‘And We Call Ourselves Sportsmen! – Not After Sunday’s Insanity’, *The Leader*, July, 8, 1960, 12.

<sup>524</sup> ‘Disgusted Over Match Being Cancelled’, *The Leader*, July 15, 1960, 13.

gate money? If that is the case I am afraid the standard of soccer will be doomed because of some ever-ardent officials who are concerned only with money.’<sup>525</sup>

There was finger-pointing in the SAIFA boardroom about who was responsible for the decision. Louis Nelson, the vice-president of SAIFA, accused his ‘colleagues’ of not consulting with him and threatened to lodge a formal complaint. He then found himself isolated at the SAIFA AGM in July 1960 where he was a lone voice but remained adamant, ‘I am answerable to a number of people and should have been able to tell these people who support us so well why they were made to suffer much personal loss.’<sup>526</sup> As a progressive measure, Nelson suggested that SAIFA host a conference in order to listen to the opinions of supporters, other officials, and various clubs. George Singh, who presided at the meeting, called on Nelson to resign if he had any club leanings. Nelson’s riposte was, ‘then I leave it to you to take full responsibility for any disruption that may occur in non-White soccer. It would be better for us to get down to the cause of the matter rather than to sit in ethereal heights and judge people from that level.’<sup>527</sup>

Nelson announced his resignation two months later, on 28 August 1960, at a conference called by DIFA at the Goodwill Lounge in Durban. He ‘attacked’ George Singh in his resignation speech: ‘The time had come for a complete change in South African soccer. Hereafter my affiliations to SAIFA and SASF shall cease because of my love for the game ... petty officialdom, the dictators who are killing the game must be done away with.’<sup>528</sup> At this conference ‘of all rebel organisations and aggrieved parties’ a fact-finding commission was appointed to ‘investigate and report on the present unsatisfactory conditions’ in South Africa soccer.<sup>529</sup> DIFA, the Johannesburg African Football Association (JAFA), the Tokyo group (DCAFA), and the South Coast Indian Football Association (SCIFA) formed a “rebel” grouping that condemned talk without action, ‘greedy’ administrators, and petty officialdom and unanimously agreed that it was time to take action. R.K. Naidoo, DIFA President, said that this was necessary because the game was ‘being hampered by men who want personal prestige’ and who coveted positions rather than seeking to further the interests of football.<sup>530</sup> Dan Twala, President of JAFA, said: ‘I hate meetings these days for it is through them that

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<sup>525</sup> ‘He, Too, is Fed Up’, *The Leader*, July 15, 1960, 13.

<sup>526</sup> Ronnie Govender. ‘Spotlights Troubles in the Soccer World’, *The Leader*, July 29, 1960, 16.

<sup>527</sup> Ronnie Govender. ‘Spotlights Troubles in the Soccer World’, *The Leader*, July 29, 1960, 16.

<sup>528</sup> ‘Another Bombshell: Nelson Resigns’, *The Leader*, September 2, 1960, 15.

<sup>529</sup> ‘Rebels Set Up Soccer Commission’, *The Leader*, September 2, 1960, 15.

<sup>530</sup> ‘Rebels Set Up Soccer Commission’, *The Leader*, September 2, 1960, 15.

we neglect footballers who are the main actors. We concentrate too much on who is going to be the next chairman, etc, while we never discuss how we can improve football.’<sup>531</sup>

In his September 1960 letter of resignation, Nelson launched another attack on Singh and his “clique” who were ‘choosing to destroy rather than to build for the future.’<sup>532</sup> Nelson accused Singh of denigrating him as a waiter. Singh apparently told another colleague, ‘What are you dealing with Mr (Nelson) for who is only a waiter and what can a waiter do for you? What does he know about soccer? ... So I am glad that before I am further insulted, to quit their company as I am a waiter’<sup>533</sup> The Nelson-Singh row is a clear symbol of class differentiation. In this context a ‘waiter’ Nelson is painted as a lower class person, who does, assumable, does not deserve to be part of SAIFA’s executive. SAIFA branded Nelson’s letter of resignation ‘anti-SAIFA’, and condemned it for having an ‘unconstitutional attitude to organised soccer in South Africa.... He should have adopted constitutional means at his disposal to have professionalism and integration, etc discussed instead of attacking SAIFA.’<sup>534</sup>

### **The racial disturbances of 1960**

SASF rescheduled the match between the national Indian and African teams for 31 July 1960. They remained tight-lipped about the reasons for the cancellation of the first match. The re-match would go down as one of the “darkest” days in the annals of non-racial sport. *The Graphic* described the scenes as unbridled fanaticism and one of the most serious disturbances ever to have occurred at a soccer match.<sup>535</sup> The earlier lockout and crowd anger probably had something to do with the events on the day as a capacity crowd of 28000 participated in riots with racial connotations. This was a record crowd for a “non-white” soccer match and generated £2542 pounds in gate takings; also a new record. However, the crowd exceeded the ground’s capacity and many spectators broke through the barriers and onto the field long before the match started. *The Leader’s* eyewitness wrote that ‘despite repeated appeals from the officials’ stand, supporters jumped over the crush barriers and seated themselves on the ground.’<sup>536</sup> The police took no action against them.

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<sup>531</sup> ‘Rebels Set Up Soccer Commission’, *The Leader*, September 2, 1960, 15.

<sup>532</sup> ‘Louis Nelson Attacks George Singh’, *The Leader*, September 23, 1960, 14.

<sup>533</sup> ‘Louis Nelson Attacks George Singh’, *The Leader*, September 23, 1960, 14.

<sup>534</sup> ‘Louis Nelson Attacks George Singh’, *The Leader*, September 23, 1960, 14.

<sup>535</sup> ‘Hooliganism at Curries’, *The Graphic*, August 5, 1960, p. 12.

<sup>536</sup> ‘What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot’, *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 1 & 4.

The trouble started when the African team scored the first goal of the match. *The Leader* reported that the tumult was sparked when the ‘Africans scored their second goal’; this is when ‘a section of the crowd was angered by the robust tactics of some of the players’.<sup>537</sup>

*Ilanga* blamed the Indian fans for starting the trouble:

*Iphoyisa lomLungu elinemyaka engu 20, uFrans Koekemoer bamphisele ngebhodlela ekhanda, bamshaya nangezicathulo wathi uzama ukubaleka kwafumaniseka ukuthi udakwe izimpama zamaNdiya wasakazeka phansi.*<sup>538</sup>

A 20-year old White constable, Frans Koekemoer, was smashed with a bottle on his head. He was hit with shoes and when he tried to run away the dizziness from Indian slaps got the better of him and he collapsed.

*The Graphic* did not mention who the perpetrators were but stated that Koekemoer had severe facial injuries and was helped by Indians and Africans into the dressing room and taken by ambulance to nearby Addington Hospital. *The Leader* wrote that ‘a European constable’ was forced to ‘tail [run] when an angry mob turned on him’ after being ‘involved in a fight with one of the spectators’.<sup>539</sup> However, both African and Indian newspapers suggested that Indian spectators sparked the riots.

The crowd violence intensified and quickly became uncontrollable. According to *The Graphic*, ‘a section of the spectators at the Race Course end began aiming bottles at the police standing near the goal post and it was then that several African fans retaliated.’<sup>540</sup> Some fans tried to help the police to calm their fellow spectators down but violence flared again when the police began ejecting fans from the ground. In another part of the ground ‘an African policeman brandished a long knife and wounded a youth’ and when the crowd turned on him he was ‘forced to flee’.<sup>541</sup> H.P. Ngwenya, president of DDFA, and other administrators appealed through the loudspeakers for calm. ‘Near the African goal two bottles were thrown at an African defender’ as the match progressed and the spectators ‘surged into the touchline.’<sup>542</sup> However, this skirmish was reported to have died down immediately.

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<sup>537</sup> ‘What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot’, *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 1 & 4.

<sup>538</sup> ‘Kwasuka Isidumo Esinamandla Kumdlalo WaBantu NamaNdiya’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 6 1960, 1.

<sup>539</sup> ‘What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot’, *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 1 & 4.

<sup>540</sup> ‘Hooliganism at Curries’, *The Graphic*, August 5, 1960, 12.

<sup>541</sup> ‘What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot’, *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 1 & 4.

<sup>542</sup> ‘What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot’, *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 1 & 4.

The calm did not last long. When play resumed, an African player, Petrus “Senzeni” Zulu, was hit on the head by a bottle and pandemonium broke loose again. *Ilanga* reported on another injury:

*Kulimale futhi uSamuel Mzizi ofunda eLoram Secondary School eThekwini, okunguyena obevimba emeshini yokuqala ... bamshaye umlomo wayinqaba wababomvu nasekhanda futhi bamphisela ngamabhodlela, eshaywa yiwo amaNdiya belu.*<sup>543</sup>

Another person injured was Samuel Mzizi of Loram Secondary School in Durban who was the goalkeeper in the juniors’ match. His head was full of blood as he was reportedly hit by the Indians with bottles on the head and mouth.

When Zulu was hit by a spectator ‘incensed at the play’ this ‘sparked off a major clash’.<sup>544</sup> The players fled to the safety of the pavilion while order was restored. *The Graphic* reported that a bottle was hurled into the pavilion, causing severe head injuries to an elderly Indian woman; a Coloured woman was caught in the middle of the clash and was hit by a flying brick; an African spectator received head and facial injuries and an Indian with a maroon blazer was hit on the head with another flying “missile”.<sup>545</sup> Thousands of spectators fled down the embankments but the frenzied pursuers hurled bricks and stones, causing damage to the M.L. Sultan premises.<sup>546</sup> The crowd panicked and ‘people ran willy-nilly as bottles, stones and other missiles began to fly.’<sup>547</sup> The fence of the adjacent M.L. Sultan Technikon (now the Durban University of Technology) was smashed and about 18 windows were damaged. Indian and African officials appealed in English and IsiZulu for calm through loud speakers, while police reinforcements arrived to restore order. The ‘dressing rooms in the stadium were changed into a temporary hospital as injured spectators were hurriedly attended to by members of the Red Cross.’<sup>548</sup>

The match was abandoned a few minutes before the final whistle with the score hanging at 4-2 in favour of the Africans. Bob Pillay opened the score for the Indians and minutes before half time, Links Padayachee made it 2-0. In the second half the Africans changed their game plan and adopted a more attacking approach. The passing game between Daniel Mokoena, E. Mbelu, “Dee”, and Bophela paid dividends as the former fired the first goal for the Africans

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<sup>543</sup> ‘Kwasuka Isidumo Esinamandla Kumdlalo WaBantu NamaNdiya’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 6 1960, 1.

<sup>544</sup> ‘What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot’, *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 1 & 4.

<sup>545</sup> ‘Hooliganism at Curries’, *The Graphic*, August 5, 1960, 12.

<sup>546</sup> ‘Hooliganism at Curries’, *The Graphic*, August 5, 1960, 12.

<sup>547</sup> ‘What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot’, *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 1 & 4.

<sup>548</sup> ‘What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot’, *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 1 & 4.

ten minutes into the second half and scored again for the Africans to draw level. Bophela completed his hat trick to put the Africans in front, 3-2. In the 70<sup>th</sup> minute E. Mbelu ensured the Africans' triumph by scoring the fourth goal to make the score 4-2.

*Lapho aBantu besebethukuthele selisuka onyaweni lihlale onyaweni, sekudlalwa umlabalaba besafuna ukufaka amanye amagoli amaningi amaNdiya esephenduke izilima*

By this time the Africans were playing a passing game as if playing chess seeking for more goals; Indians had become stupid.<sup>549</sup>

According to the *Ilanga* report, with a few minutes left to play, and the match lost, the Indians began playing rough, making high and reckless tackles, while "Indian" spectators joined in by throwing missiles and dangerous objects at African players. The referee abandoned the match.

In the immediate aftermath of the game, an unnamed NISB official was optimistic: *akaboni ukuthi ngenxa yalesibhelu ingase ingaqhubeki imidlalo lena* ('I do not see that the inter-race games will cease because of the crowd violence on the day').<sup>550</sup> Playwright Ronnie Govender, who wrote a weekly sports column for *The Leader*, was at the match and was in no doubt that, race was a key factor in sparking the conflict:

The small ground could take 20 000 at a stretch. There must have been 30 000 at that marvellous game. The tension was palpable. All it needed was a small incident and crowd violence could explode at any moment. Soccer is known as the peoples' game because of its accessibility and the excitement that contact sport evokes. It also afforded an opportunity to let off steam. In an unequal society there is a helluva lot of steam, especially among the working classes. Introduce the element of race and you have an incendiary race.<sup>551</sup>

According to "Politicus" the NIC released media statements concluding that the Curries' incident was racially motivated. In his weekly column for *The Leader*, "Politicus", who was actually A.I. Bhoola, a lawyer and contemporary of Nelson Mandela at the University of the Witwatersrand, described the NIC's statements as 'off-side', adding that such statements

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<sup>549</sup> 'U S.A WaBantu Wehlule OwamaNdiya 4- 2 eThekwini', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 6, 1960, 12.

<sup>550</sup> 'Kwasuka Isidumo Esinamandla Kumdlalo WaBantu NamaNdiya', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, August 6 1960, 1.

<sup>551</sup> Govender, *In the Manure. Memories and reflections*, 137-138.



gave a ‘twist which does no-one any good.’<sup>552</sup> Politicus downplayed the racial aspects of the violence:

It was no Indo-African riot or clash or whatsoever you will. In a highly excited crowd of some 20, 000 a few bad sportsmen lost control of themselves and spoilt a good afternoon of football ... there was no general clash or riot. The great mass of spectators remained peaceful to the end. Africans were not belabouring Indians, and Indians were not humouring Africans. They stood shoulder to shoulder, African and Indian, watching the game and there were no signs of racial antagonism or anything of the sort.<sup>553</sup>

Politicus felt that as long as separate sports organisations, constitutions and bodies existed, it was surely good thing to get different racial groups together to share an afternoon in happy competition.<sup>554</sup> He went on to state that the NIC had a duty to lead the way in forging non-racialism but had failed and that sports organisations could not be blamed for also failing in this regard:

When they had the opportunity of setting the lead, our NIC politicians themselves failed to bring about a merger of the Congresses – again, pleading practical difficulties. If our most advanced politicians fail at the topmost level to set the correct lead, little wonder it is, then, that our sports organisations have failed to abolish communalism in sport. Sport and politics go hand in love, and politics runs through the whole pattern of South African society.<sup>555</sup>

Sport reporter and teacher Ronnie Govender felt otherwise. The crowd violence convinced him that ‘racial football had to go. It was a recipe for racial conflict and, above all, it played into the hands of the apartheid regime’ by suggesting that racial integration was doomed to fail.<sup>556</sup> The Curries uproar spurred another outcry against inter-race matches and calls for the outright abolition of matches played along racial lines. Calls from all sides for an end to such matches filled the newspapers. The next publication of *The Leader* “attacked” inter-race matches. The Sports Editor of *The Leader* wrote a lead article on the publication’s front page headlined ‘Ban Racial Soccer Now’. The article echoed Ronnie Govender’s argument that

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<sup>552</sup> Politicus. ‘Indian Congress were “off-side”, *The Leader*, August 12, 1960, 8.

<sup>553</sup> Politicus. ‘Indian Congress were “off-side”, *The Leader*, August 12, 1960, 8.

<sup>554</sup> Politicus. ‘Indian Congress were “off-side”, *The Leader*, August 12, 1960, 8.

<sup>555</sup> Politicus. ‘Indian Congress were “off-side”, *The Leader*, August 12, 1960, 8.

<sup>556</sup> Govender, *In the Manure. Memories and reflections*, 139.

inter-race soccer was inherently 'dangerous'. While welcoming SAIFA's decision to henceforth 'accept players of any race,' the editor felt that this was

not enough. For too long now we have had the wool pulled over our eyes. There is absolutely no justification for racial soccer. In the interest of fostering racial harmony and having a better argument for recognition by Federation of International Football Associations we say to SASF: "down with racialism in Soccer".<sup>557</sup>

Ronnie Govender said that he did not comment in-depth on the Curries Fountain incident because he was 'getting tired' of singing the same mantra. For him, the incident was a 'heavy blow' to sport in the country and he laid the blame solely at the feet of administrators:

I am getting tired, and so are a good many people, in pointing out the glaring faults in the administration of the game which in the end must take responsibility four-square, not only for Sunday's ugly incident but also for the tipsy survey picture that the sport now presents.<sup>558</sup>

Many people were concerned about the events at Curries Fountain. A.B. Moosa of Kajee, Moosa and Company, the company that sponsored the coveted A.I. Kajee Cup for which teams competed under the auspices of the SASF, wrote to SASF secretary, George Singh: 'It has occurred to me that these inter-racial matches rather like the international competitions of the Olympics games too often incite group rivalries to an emotional level, and that as a result we have exhibitions of friction that do the cause of racial harmony great harm.'<sup>559</sup>

He added that the very ends desired by the donors and the highest ideals of racial harmony put forward by the late A.I. Kajee were defeated by inter-racial tensions on and off the sports fields. Moosa sympathised with the injured and the administrators, and called for the abolition of inter-racial competitions at provincial and national level. He recommended that, in future, the teams should be non-racial in order to improve race relations rather than perpetuate racial divisions:<sup>560</sup>

I have wondered whether it would not be better if these competitions were not inter-provincial non-racial matches between teams made up of Indians, Coloured and Bantus on

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<sup>557</sup> Sports Editor. 'Ban Racial Soccer Now', *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 1.

<sup>558</sup> Ronnie Govender. 'Soccer Has Been Dealt a Vicious Blow', *The Leader*, August 5, 1960, 12.

<sup>559</sup> 'End Inter-Racial Games', *The Graphic*, August 19, 1960, 12.

<sup>560</sup> 'End Inter-Racial Games', *The Graphic*, August 19, 1960, 12.

each side, instead of being inter-racial matches ... Much of this racial rivalry and friction would disappear and instead a sense of co-operation and friendship be encouraged.<sup>561</sup>

Moosa also emphasised that A.I. Kajee, the donor of the SASF's Trophy, 'was a believer in the cause of racial harmony ... did so much to encourage it' and was 'an avowed fighter of racial harmony' who would not have wished for such racial antagonism.<sup>562</sup> He urged the SASF to make up its mind quickly and decisively.

Many people in the Transvaal were also worried about the strong racial feeling at inter-race games. The *New Age*, a left wing newspaper, reported that a 'nasty incident was narrowly avoided' in a match between the Coloureds and Africans in the final week of November 1959. It issued an urgent appeal to end these "troublesome" games: 'the sooner we stop these (inter-race) matches which cause racial ill-feeling the better.'<sup>563</sup> In a letter to *The Leader*, D.N. Band, a "sportsman" who gave his postal address as P.O. Box 4646, Cape Town, expressed his views concerning soccer in Natal:

The Coloureds and Indians in Natal are apparently reluctant on integration, the Africans in Transvaal and Durban are also selfishly jealous of their identity, but if the principle is adopted by Federation integration and the complete removal of racial tags must come about even if not overnight.<sup>564</sup>

It is clear that officials' self-interest was a thorn in the flesh of non-racial soccer.

This was the first time that such incidents had been reported since the launch of inter-race matches. While there were many incidents of violence involving African clubs at domestic level, what made this different is the racial aspect. As sociologist Bernard Magubane wrote in the 1960s, 'in racially organised matches the loyalty of the spectators generally followed racial lines.' He added that this did not usually culminate in racial clashes even though the atmosphere was often 'fraught with dangers of violent racial rioting.' Spectators' appropriate behaviour towards members of other racial groups was attributed to the norm of "racial good

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<sup>561</sup> Ronnie Govender. 'Mr. Moosa's Hot Potato Should Shake Soccer Federation', *The Leader*, August 15, 1960, 12.

<sup>562</sup> Ronnie Govender. 'Mr. Moosa's Hot Potato Should Shake Soccer Federation', *The Leader*, August 15, 1960, 12.

<sup>563</sup> 'Sports Flashes by Recorder', *New Age*, October 13, 1960. 8

<sup>564</sup> 'A Letter to the Editor. Cape Sportsman's Appeal for "Soccer Truce"', *The Leader*, September 23, 1960, 8.

manners” which organisers encouraged to improve racial harmony and to show whites that the “other” could handle their affairs.<sup>565</sup>

After the Currie’s Fountain fracas, the NISB organised a benefit match between composite non-racial Southern and Northern Natal teams on 14 August 1960 at the Somtseu Road ground. The benefit match had a dual purpose: to raise funds for the family of Kista Naidoo, a long-serving member of the NISB, DIFA and NIFA, who died in a car accident and for those injured at Curries Fountain. Southern Natal won the match by three goals to zero.

### **Business as usual: Natal Inter-Race Soccer Tournament**

Despite the violence at Curries Fountain, the inter-racial tournament under the auspices of the NISB continued. The next match was played on 28 August 1960 at Somtseu Road between the Coloureds and Africans. The match was scheduled to take place at Curries Fountain on 14 August but due to the SASF match ending in a fracas, the NISB resolved that the remaining matches would not be played at that venue. Instead, a match between composite non-racial Maritzburg and Natal teams was played at Somtseu Road on 14 August. The Coloureds entered the 28 August match against the Africans full of confidence as they had performed well during the national Coloured tournament.<sup>566</sup> The Africans introduced a number of new faces and lost to the Coloureds for the first time since the inauguration of the tournament. While the Africans had the better of the game, the Coloureds’ goalkeeper D. Easthorpe was in top form. B. Crowie scored the all-important winning goal for the Coloureds.

The last ever match of the 15-year tournament was played in Clairwood on 30 October between the Indians and Africans. The Coloureds were watching eagerly as there was a possibility of a triple tie. Before the match, the Coloureds and Indians were both on two points; the Coloureds having beaten the Africans but lost to the Indians. This was the first time that the inter-racial soccer tournament matches were played in Clairwood.<sup>567</sup> The

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<sup>565</sup> Magubane. ‘Sport and Politics’, 29.

<sup>566</sup> Africans: P. Zulu, D. Khoza, J. Modiba, R. Mthembu, E. Mbelu, J. Mthembu, F. Nkosi, T. Nkabinde, A. Mzimela, S. Lithakong, G. Mthiyane, S. Wanda, A. Hlatshwayo, E. Bophela and E. Goba. The manager was G.P. Mndaweni. The newspapers indicated that at the time of going to press they had not received the Indian match day squad.

<sup>567</sup> Africans match-day squad: Morwick Moshoeshe, Petrus “Senzeni” Zulu (Captain), Johannes “Monkey” Modiba, David “Nduna” Khoza of Carlton Bucks, T. “Forman Power” Nkabinde of Jumpers, E. Mbelu of Union Jacks, Frederick “Dee” Nkosi, Alfred Hlatshwayo, J. Radebe, F. Buthelezi, R. Mthembu of Wanderers, E. Mthembu, Kenneth Gama of Dannhauser Home Lads, G. Mthiyane, E. Goba, and Eliakim “Remember” Bophela of Royal Engineers in Pietermaritzburg. Indians squad: M. Singarvelu, I. Govender, B. Mohan, K.C.

match was refereed by a white team led by Mr. Cox. This was a 'precautionary measure' and it was reported that, through his "brilliant refereeing" Cox 'showed up the apparent failings of our players in understanding the game when he had to stop the match on a few occasions in order to make himself properly understood.'<sup>568</sup> The match was decided in the second half when E. Bophela scored the decisive goal to give the Africans a 1-0 victory and for the first and only time the last Singh Trophy tournament ended all square in terms of points and goal difference. It was, perhaps, the perfect way to end the tournament.

### **The push for non-racialism**

The DIFA continued to push for non-racial soccer with support from the Transvaal. In a letter to DIFA, Dan Twala, president of the Transvaal African F.A. stated:

For years now we have been playing mixed football on the top-drawer level in the SA Federation games. Even there our encounters were confined to the national bodies playing along purely racial lines – SA Coloureds, SA Indians and SA Africans ... Although this first kick-off towards integration in football has engendered more keenness and competence in building up our soccer, it has in turn kept the ball in midfield too long and made us almost forget our objective – that of mixed play from club level to district and national level.<sup>569</sup>

The DIFA organised several non-racial soccer matches to heal the racial rift. On 4 September 1960 a Durban XI played against the newly formed Durban and County African Football Association (DCAAF) at Curries Fountain. The DCAAF was formed when several clubs broke away from DDAFA and staged their matches independently at Jacobs, just south of Durban. This break-away cluster was known as the "Tokyo" group. Their teams included Africans, Indians, and a few Coloured players. A number of players also broke away from the DDAFA and joined Indian and Coloured teams. The DDIFA announced that white players who wished to play with Blacks were also welcome. The media also advocated non-racialism. As one journalist stated, 'when social integration is so much desired for the

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Moodley, Siva Millar, K. Marimuthu, Teddy Jamalodeen, Thirupath Naidoo, Daya Naidoo, M. Gengan, Otto Harripersadh and M. Yacoob. Manager: A. Hoosen. The Indians had a new-look, inexperienced side because DIFA had withdrawn from NIFA as a form of resistance against SAIFA and NIFA's "slow process" for the implementation of non-racial football and professional soccer.

<sup>568</sup> 'Triple Tie for Singh Cup', *The Leader*, November 4, 1960, 13.

<sup>569</sup> O.K. Joe. 'Wind of Change Helps to Crush Racial Barriers in Non-European Sports', *Ilanga LaseNatali*, June 11, 1960, 10.

promotion of good race relations in South Africa, one cannot understand why inter-race soccer is not voluntarily dispensed with in the country.<sup>570</sup>

Another match on 11 September 1960 between mixed Natal and Transvaal teams was also staged under the auspices of DDIFA. It was described as a way of testing whether non-racial soccer would be a success. Both Natal and Transvaal fielded strong teams.<sup>571</sup> The Transvaal team was drawn from clubs such as Moroka Swallows, Pirates and Blackpool, while Natal selected most of its players from the teams playing under the Durban and County African FA, Warwickshire for Indians, Avalon Rangers for Coloureds, and Aces for both Indians and Africans. The match was watched by 9000 fans with Natal triumphing by three goals to one. Jeremiah “Hambanje” Khanyile, Dharam Mohan, and Strini Moodley scored for Natal, and Kali Page for Transvaal.<sup>572</sup>

E.I. Haffejee, vice-president of DIFA, stated that he would not ‘tolerate a form of sport based on racial lines. In cricket and in soccer, the time has come when we should be able to field players comprising of players from various race units. They must play as one representative team not as one racial side against the other.’<sup>573</sup> Throughout 1960 non-racial soccer staged on experimental lines proved a success and administrators felt that it was time for non-racial and professional soccer throughout the country. As noted previously, R. Lutchman, NISB secretary was a leading advocate in this quest. He stated that he continued to support the DIFA, who had threatened to secede from SAIFA on this issue and the DCAAF, for the ‘purpose of contributing towards the struggle for the advance of non-White sports and the fostering of better race relations.... Those who sounded pessimistic at first, are now realising the need to do away with racialism in sports.’<sup>574</sup>

The issue of non-racialism and professional soccer was causing ‘havoc’ in soccer bodies and led to tension among administrators. An example of these squabbles was noted by *New Age*:

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<sup>570</sup> ‘Natal vs T’Vaal’, *The Graphic*, September 2, 1960, 12.

<sup>571</sup> Natal: Dan Naidoo, Christopher “Two by low” Mahaye, Lionel Hamiel, S. Kheswa, Ronnie Singh, Philemon Zulu, Strini Moodley, Dharam Mohan, Sonny Morgan, Jeremiah “Hambanje” Khanyile and Siza “Ceasar” Sithole. Reserves were H. Cele, Blondie Campbell, and Bal Satgour. Transvaal: Napoleon “Kali” Page, Olivier “Ghandhi” Adams, R. Ngobese, J. Gwamanda, Joseph “Carlton” Moloi, Difference “Differ” Mbaya, S. Gumede, Edward “Fish” Neku, R. Mlangeni, Withia Moodley, Links Padayachee, A. Buhlekazi and I. Moloi.

<sup>572</sup> ‘Yehluliwe Ngebhola ITransvaal Ethekwini’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, September 24, 1960, 11.

<sup>573</sup> “‘Give Us Professional Soccer’ – is Our Plea’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, November 12, 1960, 12.

<sup>574</sup> “‘Give Us Professional Soccer’ – is Our Plea’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, November 12, 1960, 12.

The national soccer wrangle has become even more complicated as a result of the squabbles in Durban. There have been charges and counter-charges between top SAIFA officials George Singh and Louis Nelson, leading to the resignation of the latter. All this is not helping the cause of soccer.<sup>575</sup>

At its biennial meeting at the Himalaya Hotel in Durban on the weekend of 9 / 10 October 1960, the SASF passed several resolutions which had important consequences for soccer nationally. The Federation unanimously agreed to the motion proposed by A.J. Albertyn of SACFA and seconded by the Rev. Bernard Sigamoney of SAIFA to ‘accept the principle of full integration and the abolition of all units’.<sup>576</sup> All racial barriers were to be removed and inter-race tournaments abolished as they were perceived to encourage racial friction. It was also agreed to form provincial non-racial soccer boards under the aegis of the SASF and to ‘embrace professional soccer alongside amateurism’.<sup>577</sup> For *Ilanga* columnist O.K. Joe, these ‘solutions showed that some new and brisk thinking was done by officials’ before the meeting.<sup>578</sup> S.L. Singh was elected president; the vice-presidents were Reggie Ngcobo, E.G. Rooks, and A. Christopher; George Singh was secretary; and Charles M. Pillay treasurer.<sup>579</sup> O.K. Joe noted that the move towards professional soccer would enable players to be taken care of in terms of pay, insurance benefits, coaching, and proper administration – ‘give us professional football and let’s go on with the game.’<sup>580</sup>

Motholo, an executive member of the NAFA, surprised delegates when he told them that from the African standpoint, professional soccer was already practiced; “it is already there”, he said, as many clubs were “buying off” top-ranking footballers ‘quietly’.<sup>581</sup> Some delegates were sceptical about the idea of pioneering professional football. However, O.K. Joe felt that it was a positive development as it had had the potential to break down existing racial barriers in Black soccer.<sup>582</sup>

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<sup>575</sup> ‘Sports Flashes by Recorder’, *New Age*, October 6, 1960.

<sup>576</sup> ‘SASA Takes Resolutions’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, November 5, 1960, 8.

<sup>577</sup> ‘SA Soccer Federation Accepts Integration and Professional Soccer’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, October, 15, 1960, 10.

<sup>578</sup> ‘SA Soccer Federation Accepts Integration and Professional Soccer’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, October, 15, 1960, 10.

<sup>579</sup> ‘SA Soccer Federation Accepts Integration and Professional Soccer’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, October, 15, 1960, 12.

<sup>580</sup> “‘Give Us Professional Soccer’ – is Our Plea’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, November 12, 1960, 12.

<sup>581</sup> ‘Africans Should Adopt Professional Soccer’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, October 24, 1960, 10.

<sup>582</sup> ‘Africans Should Adopt Professional Soccer’, *Ilanga LaseNatali*, October 24, 1960, 10.

The SASF's decision was in part forced by a resolution passed by the FIFA Congress in Rome in August 1960 that any national soccer association seeking affiliation to FIFA must be 'open to all who practise football in that country, whether amateur, "non-amateur" or professional and without any racial, religious, or political discrimination.' The SASF aspired to affiliation at some point and thus had to embrace non-racialism. The more immediate consequence of FIFA's resolution was that the FASA, which had an all-white membership, was given one year to abide by this resolution. Apartheid policy forbade it from doing so and FASA was suspended from FIFA on 25 September 1961. For the next three decades, the boycott of South African sport was an important part of anti-apartheid struggle.<sup>583</sup>

### Summary

Summing up the year 1960 in a letter published in *New Age* in December 1960, George Singh, president and secretary of SAIFA and SASF, respectively, raised the issue of non-racialism in soccer and the quarrels between fans and selectors over the selection of Indian players in Natal:

1960 has been an eventful year.... Unprecedented success has been registered towards the abolition of sectionalism, and the fullest racial integration in all sporting codes, especially soccer. The SASF decision (in October) in this regard is momentous and epoch-making. The cry against the white racialists will sound hollow, unless we at home give practical implementation to our expressed ideals. I am confident; a great and prosperous future is within our grasp – for all sportsmen, Black as well as White.<sup>584</sup>

It was noted at the beginning of this chapter that as late as March 1960, George Singh had stated that he could not foresee professional soccer in the near future. Not only did 1960 mark the end of the Natal Inter-Race soccer tournament, but the vision of professional soccer in South Africa also came to fruition when a non-racial South African Soccer League was formed in 1961.

In many ways, the move towards non-racial sport was inevitable, given what was happening on the political front. March 1960 marked the beginning of an international boycott of South African goods in protest against apartheid, while in South Africa it marked the beginning of a three-month boycott of celebrations to mark 50 years of the Union of South Africa on 31

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<sup>583</sup> Alegi, *Laduma!*, 117-118.

<sup>584</sup> George Singh. 'Greetings to New Age', *New Age*, December 15, 1960, 8.



May. The first week of March saw hundreds of Indian and African volunteers lining up outside the Durban City Hall as the Group Areas Board began its hearings. Thousands of anti-apartheid activists spent months in jail. It is apposite that this happened in 1960, when Indians marked their centenary in South Africa. This suggests, symbolically, that they wanted to be accepted as South African citizens.

According to my references it is clear that the inter-race matches was male dominated and did not provide a room for women. The four football associations, including NISB, catered positions to men. These games were important in a context where urban leisure activities were segregated along gender, class and racial lines. With regard to gender, soccer was a masculine activity. One of the aims of this thesis was to examine the role of women in soccer. Unfortunately, little was unearthed about women's involvement both in my sources explored and contemporary newspapers. Indeed, 'Interested spectator' asked in a letter to a local newspaper:

Do you encourage your wives in games? Have you ever taken them to see a football match? We are not so ignorant, mind you. We know that when the ball comes into the net its a goal and we know all about centre halves and wings and goalies. I doubt not, because of your inherent fear of your parents and the community.<sup>585</sup>

The 1962 SAFA brochure did include articles by two women, Mrs. S.T. Martin and Mrs. M. Rev. Ngcobo entitled, 'Do Our Women Play The Game? By Two of Them.'

**Martin (Most regular female patron at Currie's Fountain – She ought to know!)**

On first thoughts, I would say: No! How often, I have been the sole female supporter at the largest and finest of Natal's non-European grounds. Only on "State" occasions, we find our Indian women-folk in attendance – and then in sparse numbers. Even at Provincial Inter-Race Matches the Indian women lag behind their Coloured counterparts, who in turn lag behind African women. The African women do turn up well and when they do, they shout their teams to victory. Why should Indian women feel so shy and so timid? I must confess they have a lot to learn and certainly do miss tons of excitement which comes only from soccer. If they can persuade their husbands, their fiancés and their relatives to take them to the Cinema, then why not to our thrilling soccer games? In most cases the men are

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<sup>585</sup> Letter to *The Leader*, 23 April 1947.

to blame. If they dictated policy at home I am sure more women would be seen on our grounds. But I still say, it is up to our women to come to our South African Soccer fields, to enjoy the thrills of the game and to shout our men on. It is such great fun; and they must not miss it – even if it means insistence, more than persuasion. By their presence, I am sure that the discipline on our fields will improve and our young men will learn to appreciate and respect the weaker sex for gracing their matches. I also hope that on the administrative side our associations will provide the proper and necessary amenities for the comfort of our women-folk, so that they will feel encouraged to attend these matches. I hope the menfolk will support this challenge.

**Mrs Ngcobo (Wife of National Selector)**

African women, like women of any other racial group, are vitally interested in recreation; but, with the social set up being what we know it to be, several factors militate against the African woman taking a more active role in the recreational activity of her people. First among these factors is the fact that the majority of African women are employed as domestic servants and are, consequently, at work over the weekend when these games are being played. One has also to remember that human nature is particularly selfish, and those in privileged positions wants all. If, therefore, hardly occurs to some employers that the African womenfolk is entitled to recreation or leisure, even if this means attending a football match to cheer-up their counterpart. Secondly, Municipalities, within whose orbit most of the recreation grounds are situated conveniently shut their eyes to the need for recreation for African women. The result is that for the African women the enthusiasm for sport is gradually and systematically being deadened. It is, however, gratifying to observe that, in spite of the many and varies obstacles, there is a steady growth of love for fellowship – the renaissance of the human spirit – amongst the African women plays a prominent part. This is evidenced by their ever increasing numbers at our football grounds and the fact that they continue to help, as they have always done, their men folk by washing their shorts, jerseys and stockings, thus making it possible for them to take to the field of play in as clean a condition as players of any other race.

These articles suggest that some African and Coloured women attended matches as spectators, but few Indian women. There is no evidence, however, of women's involvement as players and administrators.

## Conclusion

In the aftermath of the Second World War, FIFA had 54 members, half of them from Europe. FIFA's membership expanded as countries gained their freedom from the long shadow of colonialism. Thirty one African states gained membership between 1958 and 1967. As European colonialism collapsed and states achieved independence, they often gained simultaneous membership of the Organisation of African Union (OAU), the United Nations (UN) and FIFA. FIFA failed to anticipate this growth and its potential consequences; instead, under the leadership of Englishman Sir Stanley Rous from 1961, it concentrated on the technical aspects of the game and running the World Cup. Rous described his work in Africa as 'general missionary work.' This 'almost colonial mindset,' as Darby describes it, upset many African members who felt that the Rous presidency was marked by 'the marginalisation of African football and European protectionism.'<sup>586</sup>

Rous was unpopular with many African members. However, it was his attitude towards apartheid South Africa rather than his abiding commitment to Olympian amateurism and his lack of concern with the commercial aspects of the game that generated antagonism and dissent. Rous supported the (white) FASA as he abhorred mixing sport and politics. FASA president, Fred Fell informed Rous that his organisation was not responsible for clubs outside its responsibility and that it was not discriminatory, but was constrained by the country's race laws.<sup>587</sup>

Following his election, Rous pushed for a commission to investigate the situation in South Africa. Despite demands from the non-racial SASF that he recuse himself because he was a champion of South Africa's continued membership, he personally headed this commission. Rous arrived in South Africa in 1963 accompanied by Jimmy Maguire, President of the United States Soccer Federation. FASA went on the offensive in response to the challenge from the SASF. The former emphasized FIFA's 'non-political' stance in its submission and labelled SASF officials 'political agitators' who were 'merely using soccer as a catspaw for their own selfish ends, and are not in any way interested in what is best for soccer football in Southern Africa, both for Europeans and non-Europeans.... The very large majority of the

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<sup>586</sup> Paul Darby. Stanley Rous's 'own goal' football politics, South Africa and the Contest for the FIFA presidency in 1974, *Soccer and Society*. 9.2 (April 2008): 259-272, 261.

<sup>587</sup> Darby. Stanley Rous's "own goal", 264.

latter are uneducated, and not fit to assume positions of authority in any other sphere of life.’<sup>588</sup> Rous echoed FASA’s views of Black soccer associations:

There is no other body that can take the place of FASA. The members of the dissident federations whom we interviewed would, in our opinion, be quite unsuitable to represent Association Football in South Africa. Their attitude was one of destruction and not construction in any way. We found that they desired to hinder and to act contrary to government policy.<sup>589</sup>

Rous’ official report argued that FIFA ‘cannot be used as a weapon to force government to change its internal sports policy.’<sup>590</sup> He was supported by 15 votes to five by the Executive Committee and the suspension was lifted in January 1963. Rous urged members ‘to take no notice’ of SANROC’s letter: ‘I know these peoples. I have been in South Africa to meet them.... In fact this group is more interested in communist politics than in football.’<sup>591</sup>

CAF’s general secretary, Mustapha Fahmy described the decision as a ‘direct insult to Pan-Africanism’; he added that that CAF regarded South Africa ‘as if she belongs to another continent.’ CAF adopted a resolution at an Extraordinary General Assembly in Cairo on 24 January 1963 that it would have ‘nothing to do with FASA until such time that its obnoxious apartheid policy is totally eliminated from its set-up, and operation ...’<sup>592</sup>The anti-apartheid lobby gathered momentum and by the Tokyo Congress of 1964, the FIFA Executive Committee’s decision was rescinded by 48 votes to 15.<sup>593</sup> However, Rous continued to speak on behalf of FASA. An exasperated Kenyan delegate summed up the general African response when he told the 1968 CAF General Assembly:

In his [Rous’s] declaration we saw the manifestation of old and dying colonialism. It is of no avail to him to say that the Football Association of South Africa has committed no crime because it is the government which is responsible for the apartheid policy. It is the government that controls the affairs of FASA. We in Kenya wish to see that all means possible are used to bring about a change in South Africa so that our brothers there may enjoy the freedom of sports we have.<sup>594</sup>

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<sup>588</sup> Sugden, J and Tomlinson, A. *FIFA and the Contest for World Football*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998. 136.

<sup>589</sup> Sugden and Tomlinson, *FIFA and the Contest*, 136.

<sup>590</sup> Sugden and Tomlinson, *FIFA and the Contest*, 134.

<sup>591</sup> Sugden and Tomlinson, *FIFA and the Contest*, 136.

<sup>592</sup> Darby, Stanley Rous’s “own goal”, 265.

<sup>593</sup> Darby, Stanley Rous’s “own goal”, 267.

<sup>594</sup> Sugden and Tomlinson, *FIFA and the Contest*, 137.

Unhappiness with Rous mounted and he was replaced by Brazilian, Joao Havelange. Havelange made it clear during his African tour that South Africa would never become a member of FIFA as long as he was president and it practiced apartheid.<sup>595</sup>

South African football would remain banned from FIFA until the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990.

Apartheid and segregation stifled South African sport for decades. In this context the attempt by Indians, Africans, and Coloureds to forge links across racial grounds was a noble, if flawed, endeavour.

The rich history and significance of the Natal Inter-race Soccer Board Tournament has been, and continues to be, overshadowed by the omnipotence of apartheid and political opposition to it. It is indeed surprising that the history of this 15-year triple contested tournament has been neglected for so long. Natal's inter-race soccer matches coincided with ongoing attempts by the National Party to deny the rights of the Black majority. The Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board launched the inter-race games to improve and soothe relations and tensions between Africans, Indians, and Coloureds, in Natal. The province, particularly the cities of Durban and Pietermaritzburg, proved to be the engine room of South African soccer; as were the inter-race matches.

The inter-race matches were undoubtedly the most eagerly anticipated in Natal. They drew spectators from all walks of life and recorded record-breaking attendance at times. Although the matches involved African, Coloured and Indian players, they attracted some white spectators; the colour bar was not part of the stadiums' entry requirements. Fans shared seats and standing space regardless of race. However, this was not the case with matches between white teams, where Black spectators occupied a separate area in accordance with the Donges Declaration of 1956. The annual inter-race Singh Trophy saw people categorised as racially different playing and watching the games together.

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<sup>595</sup> Sugden and Tomlinson, *FIFA and the Contest*, 138.

Africans spent virtually all their leisure time with other Africans; Indians and Coloureds likewise. The parallel sport structures meant that the citizens of Durban did not socialise across racial lines. Structural constraints such as the lack of facilities stymied the growth of the game amongst Blacks. It could be argued that the fact that tournaments and games were organized between same-race teams from different provinces, and, in the case of Indian soccer, with teams from India, fortified race identities.

Important as the tournament was, officials were eventually obliged to blow a final whistle on the games. This was due to several reasons. First, the matches failed to fulfil the purpose for which they were designed - to soothe tensions between race groups. At first glance, the design of the matches was not a desirable solution. It is highly likely that Coloured supporters supported the Coloured team, Indians patronised the Natal Indians and Africans supported "their" team. This perpetuated racial identities. As has been demonstrated, local newspapers also perpetuated an 'us' against 'them' mentality. Although it only occurred after 15 years of the inception of the tournament, the 1960 racial friction at Curries Fountain remains one of the darkest days of South African soccer history, not only because of what happened, but because of the racial implications of the incidents. Whatever the real reason for the conflict and although violence was common at soccer matches, this incident had racial undertones. In a context where there was already tension between Indians and Africans, this could not be tolerated. It is contended that the 'mixed teams' organised by both the Transvaal and Natal Inter-race Boards were a healthier idea than 'racialised' matches. They were not a frequent occurrence, but did pave the way for non-racial soccer in the 1960s.

Secondly, inter-race matches contradicted the path to non-racial football being charted by Dennis Brutus and other outstanding fighters for non-racial sport in South Africa. They sent delegates to the world Olympic Committee and FIFA to argue for apartheid South Africa to be barred from international sport. These two bodies were influential in removing South Africa from the international arena. It follows that local associations should have led by example and eradicated segregated sport within the country. This would have reflected developments in the political arena, where there was much interaction across racial boundaries.

The 'wind of change' had started to blow away racialisation in other 'Black' sporting codes such as boxing, tennis and cricket. Soccer, the so-called national sport of Black South Africans, had to follow the same path. The eradication of 'race' was accompanied by a

project to introduce non-racial professional soccer. After heated arguments between 1958 and 1960, professional soccer materialised in Natal. The parent body, SASF, launched the anti-racist SASL which folded within six years due, in part, to the lack of playing grounds. Nevertheless the eradication of ‘race’ from Black soccer was a powerful statement of intent in the long journey to non-racial soccer in South Africa, coupled with international recognition. It was only in 1991, when SAFA adopted non-racial principles and re-affiliated to FIFA, that South Africa took its first steps towards genuine, non-racial soccer.

During the late 1950s, all the associations’ officials had a vested interest in retaining race-based organisations. The myth of homogenous, non-racial administrators should be deconstructed. Many officials sought positions and power and protected their “turf”; they should not be placed on a pedestal. The split in the DDFA is a good example of the kind of power that soccer officials wielded. As president, Henry Posselt Gagu Ngwenya built the DDFA into a soccer powerhouse, and became president of SAFA. According to Alegi, he ‘seemed less interested in helping the national organisation than in using his new role as the head of the largest African sporting institution in the country to boost his personal power.’<sup>596</sup> There were no doubt others like him and they resisted the adoption of non-racialism because it threatened their hegemonic positions. Kuper observed that unity among Black sports players and administrators:

... is complicated by internal divisions. In much the same way that certain chiefs support the Government’s policy, so too there are non-Whites willing to serve in paternalistic associations, directly or by affiliation under white control.... Whites can offer attractive incentives to non-White affiliates and conversely they can exert pressure against non-affiliated associations, as indeed they have done in some cities, through municipal control over sports facilities.... The result is antagonism by the more militant non-White sportsmen towards those of their fellows they regard as “selling out” to Whites, an antagonism analogous to that between the militants and the collaborators in the political field, though less intense.<sup>597</sup>

In retrospect, it can be argued that the move to ‘racialise’ soccer, whatever the motive, was based on ‘twisted’ logic because it reinforced the consciousness of racial identities. However, it is likely that had the Curries Fountain incident not occurred, we would not be criticising the

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<sup>596</sup> Alegi, *Laduma!*, 102.

<sup>597</sup> Kuper, *African Bourgeoisie*, 360.

NISB for orchestrating the inter-race tournament. We would only speak of the 'need' to remove 'race' and introduce professional football in the country. Indeed, it should be noted that in the 15 years of the tournament's existence, there was minimal fan violence or racial friction, in comparison with matches played under the auspices of individual associations.

For example, it appears that soccer gave Indian men an outlet to express their frustration with the daily work grind. *The Graphic* and *The Leader* carried headline like, 'Spectators Slash Soccer Official's Nose - Police Make Baton Charge,' 'Referee's Tooth Knocked Out,' 'Police, Fence, Stewards - No Peace,' and 'Rowdy Element in Soccer.' It was reported that players at one match who were dissatisfied with a referee's decision struck the official 'in the face.... The match was abandoned and the crowd then swarmed on to the playing area and surged round the referee. The crowd dispersed when the police arrived....'<sup>598</sup> The following report shows that this was a fairly common occurrence:

The 1949 season is two weeks old but the rowdy element is again forcing itself into soccer. Season after season the same things occur. Matches are abandoned because of "dirty play"; not abiding by a referee's decision; referees, players, spectators being assaulted by the rowdy element; spectators instigating players to play rough, and so on. A series of unpleasant incidents culminated in a referee's strike last season which caused fixtures to be discontinued.<sup>599</sup>

Leo Kuper also makes a telling observation:

In contrast to the matches between the main African clubs, the inter-racial matches in Durban only once erupted into race violence between Africans and Indians.... The greater peacefulness of the interracial matches is difficult to interpret. African and Indian crowds identify with the teams of the own race, and there appears to be a deep emotional involvement. Whether this is as intense as the involvement of Africans in the fortunes of the clubs they support, it is impossible to say. There is much latent hostility between Africans and Indians, and competition in a game taken as seriously as football would seem to invite race riots. Perhaps it is the greater danger of a conflict between two large racial groups which more effectively restrains violence. Or perhaps the competition between African clubs is a substitute for intertribal clashes.<sup>600</sup>

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<sup>598</sup> *The Leader*, 7 August 1948.

<sup>599</sup> *The Leader*, 30 April 1949.

<sup>600</sup> Kuper, *African Bourgeoisie*, 357.



This serves to temper excessive criticism of the organizers of the inter-race tournament. The NISB matches were, arguably, the most anticipated and eagerly followed matches and the most talked-about games; they catapulted the game from racial separation to a non-racial field. This was a moment in history when Black people refused to be political footballs but were determined to play the game on their own terms.

The end of racialised football did put an end to African-Indian antagonism; tensions remain. There was violence between the two groups in Inanda in 1985<sup>601</sup> and stereotypes are still prevalent in the post-apartheid period. Music has also been used to perpetuate such stereotypes. In a widely reported case in 2002, the Zulu musician, Mbongeni Ngema 'courted controversy when the lyrics of one of his songs (titled *AmaNdiya* [Indians]) attacked the Indian population in KwaZulu-Natal, claiming that they were exploiting and discriminating against Africans.'<sup>602</sup> Flint observes that the:

Zulu song ... blamed Indians (*amaNdiya*) for African hardship and poverty and called on Zulu men to confront Indian exploiters. Within the confines of KZN's cities and towns, Africans and Indians work, shop, play and live in close proximity to one another ... Following public and private discussions generated by Mbongeni's song, it became clear to me that each group was misinformed about the history of the other, and neither had any real knowledge of a shared history.<sup>603</sup>

The song was interpreted differently by the two groups and also sparked fears of a repeat of 1949. Many Africans felt that Ngema's song 'mirrored their daily reality and that they experienced Indians as an abusive merchant class' while Indians were infuriated, noting their 'continued political marginalisation, first by whites during the apartheid era and now by a new majority African government.'<sup>604</sup>

These Indo-Afro tensions have also been a feature of soccer matches in recent years. When Manchester United came to South Africa to play the two Soweto archrivals, Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates in 2006, many Africans were upset that some Indians and whites

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<sup>601</sup> See Heather Hughes, 'Violence in Inanda,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 13.3 (1987): 331-354

<sup>602</sup> G. Baines. 'Racist Hate Speech in South Africa's Fragile Democracy'. In *Popular Music Censorship in Africa*, ed. M. Drewett, and M. Cloonan, 53-70 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 56.

<sup>603</sup> Karen E. Flint, 'Indian-African Encounters: Polyculturalism and African Therapeutics in Natal, South Africa, 1886-1950s.' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 32, 2: 367-385. 367.

<sup>604</sup> Flint. Indian-African Encounters, 367.

supported the overseas teams; they accused them of being “sell-outs” and disloyal. Fletcher observes that what ‘infuriated many Chiefs fans was the notion that many of the “United” fans had probably never been to Old Trafford to see “their” team live.’<sup>605</sup> He added that one Chiefs supporter put it thus: ‘Just pick ten Indians. Ask them have you been in England? Maybe all ten of them, they’ve never been.’<sup>606</sup> This statement is indicative of racial tension between Africans and Indians in post-apartheid South Africa.

As I completed this thesis in 2013, an organisation called the Mayibuye African Forum (MAF), led by one Zweli Sangweli was fanning anti-Indian sentiments by suggesting that Indians benefited under apartheid, that Mohandas K. Gandhi was a racist who collaborated with the British Imperial regime, and that, therefore, Indians should not benefit from affirmative action policies and Black Economic Empowerment (BEE).<sup>607</sup> This demonstrates that, although “race” does not exist, skin colour remains a powerful way to organise people and that at different times, different issues are used to rally people. As a recent editorial in *The Witness* suggests, ‘xenophobia, racial stereotyping, ethnicity and tribalism - maladies of a polarised past - lurk in the background, ready to be seized upon in anger and tough economic times. Going down this route is a slippery slope that could squander our liberation gains. As South Africans, we need to take a step back and look deeply at ourselves. For this is no longer apartheid South Africa. The country belongs to all who live in it.’<sup>608</sup>

The inter-race soccer matches produced a great number of players. By the time I wrote this dissertation, in 2013, none of the Indian players who participated in the inter-race tournament were still alive. The last two surviving members, Natroon Soobramoney (78) and Teddy Jamalodeen (79), ‘two of the last surviving members of an illustrious band of South African Indian footballers who achieved fame in the historic inter-race series in the 1950s’ died in Pietermaritzburg in July 2010.<sup>609</sup> *The Witness* believes that these two last surviving members:

... belonged to a period of Indian football history that featured some of the greatest Indian footballers of all time — famous men like Billy Reddy, Links Padayachee, Bob

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<sup>605</sup> Marc Fletcher ‘You must support Chiefs; Pirates already have two white fans!’: race and racial discourse in South African football fandom, *Soccer & Society*, 11.1-2 (2010):79-94, 84.

<sup>606</sup> Fletcher, ‘You must support Chiefs. 84.

<sup>607</sup> See, for example, ‘Stirring the racial pot, *The Witness*, 9 May 2013, accessed 6 November 2013, [http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B\\_id%5D=100079](http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B_id%5D=100079).

<sup>608</sup> See, for example, ‘Stirring the racial pot, *The Witness*, 9 May 2013, accessed 6 November 2013, [http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B\\_id%5D=100079](http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B_id%5D=100079).

<sup>609</sup> Shan Pillay. ‘City loses football legends’, *The Witness*, 16 July, 2010, accessed 15 February 2014, [http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B\\_id%5D=44150](http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B_id%5D=44150).

Pillay, James Oliver, V.C. Moodley, K. ‘Matambo’ Mariemutthoo, K. Rajagopal, Thiri Rampath, and Dharam Mohan.<sup>610</sup>

Jamaloodeen hailed from Newcastle whilst Soobramoney who was born in Durban became household names in Pietermaritzburg as they participated in Natal inter-race series in its tenure, featured in matches of the Maritzburg Indian Football Association (MIFA) in representative games, represented the Northern Natal side that played against Southern Natal in several inter-zonal competitions and in the Sam China Cup series in 1957. Soobramoney achieved a feat that was never met by any other player when, in 1955, he became the ‘youngest player ever to play in a provincial tournament, adding two hat-tricks when he played in the Sam China Cup, against Northern Natal and Transvaal.’<sup>611</sup> After the end of racial games and introduction of professional football in 1961, Jamaloodeen played for Maritzburg City before hanging up his boots after an illustrious career.

*The Witness* also reminds us of two of the greatest Coloured players who also hailed from Pietermaritzburg, Elijah Ali “Cheetah” Nagel and the Captain Edmond “Sambo” Dutlow. The newspaper interviewed Nagel, a retired motor mechanic well known as “Cheetah” because of his speed, in his heyday. The Coloureds side of the story is virtually identical to the Indians one as, by November 2010, Nagel was the only remaining member of the South African and Natal Coloured Soccer teams of the fifties after the death of long-time captain Dutlow in 2010. Nagel, a resident of Eastwood, Pietermaritzburg, was the youngest member of the Coloured team. Nagel tells that soccer was an important facet in the Coloured community and reminisces of the good old days. He tells that:

“Soccer was an important part of the coloured community and we took it very seriously. We had no help from any authorities and we had to pay for everything ourselves ... During the apartheid years we were not allowed to play against whites so we played in an inter-race league of Africans, Indians and Coloureds. There was a Natal coloured team that was selected mostly from Pietermaritzburg and Durban and a South African coloured team that was selected from all the provinces ... We practised twice a week on a ground where the garages at the [Royal] showgrounds are now and played matches in the arena on Saturdays. Our families were also involved and they used to watch our

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<sup>610</sup> Shan Pillay. ‘City loses football legends’, *The Witness*, 16 July, 2010, accessed 15 February 2014, [http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B\\_id%5D=44150](http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B_id%5D=44150).

<sup>611</sup> Shan Pillay. ‘City loses football legends’, *The Witness*, 16 July, 2010, accessed 15 February 2014, [http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B\\_id%5D=44150](http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B_id%5D=44150).

matches. We trained hard, running and exercising, none of the fancy things that they have now. On Sundays our coach used to take us down to Durban to run on the beach. That really built up our strength and fitness.”<sup>612</sup>

Nagel hanged his boots after a robbery incident that injured him and he turned to coaching the youth in Eastwood. Sport in the Dutlow family was the order of the day as together with the community members the family had formed the Railway Soccer Club. Nagel describes “Sambo”, who played both soccer and cricket, as a prolific and special player whom he regards as one of the best players to have come out of South African soil. He describes Dutlow as a ‘master builder’ who was a ‘dedicated sportman’ who ‘captained every team he played for’ because he understood the ‘importance of psychology in sport long before the concept was recognised.’<sup>613</sup> Nagel’s greatest moment of Dutlow was when he “scored a goal that hit the ball and the goalkeeper into the net” in a match against the SA Indian team at Curries Fountain.<sup>614</sup> His brother-in-law, Hennie Petersen, has high praise for Dutlow as he describes him as a quick-thinking player who could “kick with both feet” who, in one time “kicked the ball so hard it knocked the upright of the nets out of the ground so the crossbar almost fell on the goalkeeper and the ball popped.”<sup>615</sup> When Stephen “Kalamazoo” Mokone and David Julius, the first black South Africans to sign professional contracts overseas, Dutlow was also invited to sign but declined as he opted to stay with his family in Pietermaritzburg. Dutlow is said to have continued going to the gym until the age of 67.

The inter-race soccer matches produced a number of prolific players who would have made it big in the soccer fraternity had colour not been the hindrance to their abilities.

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<sup>612</sup> Julia Denny-Dimitriou, ‘*Cheetah and Sambo: a South African Soccer Story*’, *The Witness*, 26 November, 2010, accessed 15 February 2014,

[http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B\\_id%5D=31668](http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B_id%5D=31668)

<sup>613</sup> Julia Denny-Dimitriou, ‘*Cheetah and Sambo: a South African Soccer Story*’, *The Witness*, 26 November, 2010, accessed 15 February 2014,

[http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B\\_id%5D=31668](http://www.witness.co.za/index.php?showcontent&global%5B_id%5D=31668)

<sup>614</sup> Julia Denny-Dimitriou, ‘*Cheetah and Sambo: a South African Soccer Story*’, *The Witness*, 26 November, 2010, accessed 15 February 2014,

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<sup>615</sup> Julia Denny-Dimitriou, ‘*Cheetah and Sambo: a South African Soccer Story*’, *The Witness*, 26 November, 2010, accessed 15 February 2014,

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**1948 (All matches at Curries Fountain)**

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
14 August 1948	Natal Coloureds vs Natal Africans (A. Wood; C. Dutlow)	1 - 0	2 - 0
5 September 1948	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds (Bootie Singh; P. Somalingam; Kista Govender; "Lightie" Chinniah)	2 - 1	4 - 1
2 October 1948	Natal Indians vs Natal Africans (Bootie Singh x 2; James Oliver; "Kondiah" Somalingam; "Lightie" Chinniah) *Scorer of Indians' 6 <sup>th</sup> goal was not reported	3 - 0	6 - 1
<b>INDIANS WON THE 1948 INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>			

**1949**

The tournament did not take place due to Durban (race) riots.

**1950 (all matches were played at Curries Fountain)**

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
16 July 1950	Natal Coloureds vs Natal Africans (D. Christians x 2; A. Eksteen; D. Davis; A. Thompson)	2 - 0	5 - 3
29 July 1950	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds (T. Rampath; "Kondiah" Somalingam) *Coloureds goal scorer was not reported.	0 - 0	2 - 1
13 August 1950	Natal Indians vs Natal Africans (Titty Govender)	1 - 1	1 - 1
<b>INDIANS WON THE 1950 INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>			

**1951(all matches were played at Curries Fountain)**

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
8 July 1951	Natal Indians vs Natal Africans		

	(T. Rampath x 2)	(W. Mdhlalose; H. Shongwe x 2)	2 - 0	3 - 2
17 August 1951	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds ("Kondia" Somalingam; Bob Pillay; T. Rampath; Massey Pillay) *Coloureds goal scorers not reported.		2 - 0	4 - 4
9 September 1951	Natal Africans vs Natal Coloureds (C. Zwane; V. Makathini) * 3 <sup>rd</sup> goal scorer for Africans was not Reported		2 - 0	3 - 0
<b>AFRICANS WON THE 1951 INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>				

**1952 (all matches were played at Curries Fountain)**

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
3 August 1952	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds (Bob Pillay x 3) *Coloureds goal scorer was not reported.	–	3 - 1
17 August 1952	Natal Africans vs Natal Coloureds (G. Moeketsi)	1 - 1	2 - 1
7 September 1952	Natal Africans vs Natal Indians (H. Zuma; G. Moeketsi)	2 - 0	2 - 2
11 October 1952 (Replay)	Natal Africans vs Natal Indians ("Lightie" Chinniah)	0 - 1	0 - 1
<b>INDIANS WON THE 1952 INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY AFTER A REPLAY</b>			

**1953**

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
5 July 1953	Natal Indians vs Natal Africans ("Kondiah" Somalingam; "Boya" Naidoo)	2 - 0	2 - 1
19 July 1953	Natal Coloureds vs Natal Africans (D. Davis x 3; R. Dutlow; A. Joseph)	2 - 0	5 - 3
2 August 1953	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds (Bob Pillay x2; "Kondiah" Somalingam x2 T. Rampath) *The Indians sixth goal scorer not reported	3 - 2	6 - 4
<b>INDIANS WON THE 1953 INTER-RACE SINGHS TROPHY</b>			

## NATAL-TRANSCVAAL INTER-RACE MATCH

16 August 1953 at Johannesburg

TRANSCVAAL 4 - 3 Natal

(Gerald Francis x4)

(T. Rampath x2; Mannie Naidoo)

### 1954(all matches were played at Curries Fountain)

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
9 May 1954	Natal Africans vs Natal Coloureds (E. Fakazi x3; W. Ndimande; A. Luthuli) *Coloureds goal scorers were not reported.	3 - 0	5 - 2
23 May 1954	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds (James Oliver; Billy Reddy; Bob Pillay (R. Dubois; V. Dolley)	1 - 1	3 - 2
4 July 1954	Natal Indians vs Natal Africans (Bob Pillay x2; Bob Maistry) *Africans 2 <sup>nd</sup> goal scorer was not reported. ("Fobes")	-	3 - 2
<b>INDIANS WON THE 1954 INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>			

### 1955 (all matches were played at Curries Fountain)

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
3 July 1955	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds (Gansen Naidoo;) *Other goal scorers were not reported.	2 - 1	3 - 2
17 July 1955	Natal Africans vs Natal Coloureds (R. "The Doctor" Kinsey) *Other goal scorers were not reported.	2 - 1	3 - 1
31 July 1955	Natal Africans vs Natal Indians (G. Moeketsi; H. Zuma; M. Ntshangase x2; E. Bophela)	4 - 0	5 - 0
<b>AFRICANS WON THE 1955 INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>			



## NATAL-TRANSCVAAL INTER-RACE MATCH

2 October 1955 at Curries Fountain.

Natal 5 – 1 TRANSVAAL

(E. Bophela x 3; D. Dhlomo; (S. Ngubane)

Moeketsi)

### 1956

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
10 June 1956 at Stamford Hill Coloured Sports Ground	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds (N. Subramoney x3; (B. Crowie; F. Eglehof)	1 - 0	3 - 2
19 August 1956 at Somtseu Road Grounds	Natal Africans vs Natal Coloureds (M. Ntshangase; (N. Steinbank x3; D. Kunene x4; R. Grendon) V. Makathini; E. Bophela)	4 - 2	7 - 4
30 September 1956 at Somtseu Road Grounds	Natal Africans vs Natal Indians (E. Bophela x3) (Boya Govender x2)	2 - 2	3 - 2
<b>AFRICANS WON THE 1956 INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>			

### 1957

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
7 July 1957 at Somtseu Road Grounds	Natal Africans vs Natal Indians (M. Zulu; (S. Sivalingam; "Shordex" Zuma x2; "Chockie" Nair) P. Zulu; V. Makathini; D. Dhlomo x2)	3 - 2	7 - 2
4 August 1957 at Stamford Hill Coloured Sports Ground	Natal Coloureds vs Natal Indians (E. Cooper; ("Chockie" Nair x2) R. Grendon x2; V. Dorley)	2 - 2	3 - 2
22 September 1957/1957 at Somtseu Road Grounds	Natal Africans vs Natal Coloureds  *Goal scorers were not reported		5 - 4
<b>AFRICANS WON THE 1957 INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>			

## 1958

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
8 June at Stamford Hill Coloured Sports Ground	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds (C. Naidoo; "Bobby") <b>*Coloureds goal scorer not reported</b>	1 - 1	2 - 1
3 August 1958 at Somtseu Road Grounds	Natal Africans vs Natal Coloureds (E. Bophela x2; D. Dhloho; G. Sithole;) (N. Starkey x2; A. Joseph)	3 - 1	4 - 3
7 September 1958 at Curries Fountain	Natal Africans vs Natal Indians (E. Bophela; V. Makathini) (Bob Pillay)	1 - 1	2 - 1
<b>AFRICANS WON THE 1958 INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>			

### NATAL-TRANSSVAAL INTER-RACE MATCH (24 August 1958 at Curries Fountain)

Natal 1 - 6 TRANSVAAL

(H. Zuma) and L. Singh (Oliver Adams; A. Thangwa x2; V. Sithole; H. Crowder)

### 1959 (All matches were played at Curries Fountain)

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
7 June 1959	Natal Indians vs Natal Coloureds (Bob Pillay x2; D. Mohan x2) (B. Crowie) <b>*Indians 1<sup>st</sup> goal was not reported</b>	2 - 1	5 - 1
5 July 1959	Natal Africans vs Natal Coloureds (C. Sono; P. Zulu; K. Gama)	1 - 0	3 - 0
2 August 1959	Natal Indians vs Natal Africans (D. Mohan x3; Bob Pillay x2) (C. Sono)	2 - 0	5 - 1
<b>INDIANS WON THE INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>			

## 1960

DATE	MATCH	HALF-TIME SCORE	FINAL SCORE
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29 May 1960	Natal Indians (D. Mohan; Ronnie Singh; Jamalooden)	vs	Natal Coloureds (L. Sharpley x2)	2 - 1	3 - 2
28 August 1960 at Somtseu Road Grounds	Natal Coloureds (B. Crowie)	vs	Natal Africans	0 - 0	1 - 0
30 October 1960 at Clairwood Sports Grounds	Natal Africans (E. Bophela)	vs	Natal Indians	0 - 0	1 - 0
<b>TRIPLE-TIE: ALL THREE TEAMS WON THE INTER-RACE SINGH TROPHY</b>					

### INTERESTING STATISTICS

- Indians won the Inter-Race Singh Trophy seven times (1947, 1948, 1950, 1952, 1953, 1954 & 1959).
- Africans won it six times (1946, 1951, 1955, 1956, 1957 and 1958).
- There was a triple-tie in 1960; the last ever Singh's Trophy of the NISB.
- Indians scored a total of 80 goals in the tenure of the tournament.
- Africans scored 75 goals.
- Coloureds scored 56 goals.
- A total of 187 goals were scored in the 14 years of the tournament.
- Only three matches were drawn, with two matches played between the Indians and Africans. The other was a 4-4 thrilling draw between the Indians and Coloureds.
- The Inter-Provincial Inter-Race "Friendlies" of the Natal and Transvaal Inter-Race Soccer Boards were played four times. Natal won in 1947 and 1955, with Transvaal winning in 1953 and 1958.

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