

FIRST TOUCH

March 2019

AFCON 2019

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AFCON GLORY**

THE THREE GREAT COACHES

AFRICA HAS EVER SEEN

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ARSENAL LEGACY

CAN IWOBIE SIEZE IT?

FirstTouch Africa

Football Fact



Pep Guardiola as has a total of 28 Victories in his coaching career. They include:

2x World's Best Club Coach,	3x Uefa SuperCup winner
2x Champions League winner,	3x FIFA Club World Cup winner
1x English Champion,	1x UEFA Manager of the Year
3x Spanish Champion,	2x German Cup winner
3x German Champion,	2x Spanish Cup winner
2x English League Cup winner,	3x Spanish Super Cup winner

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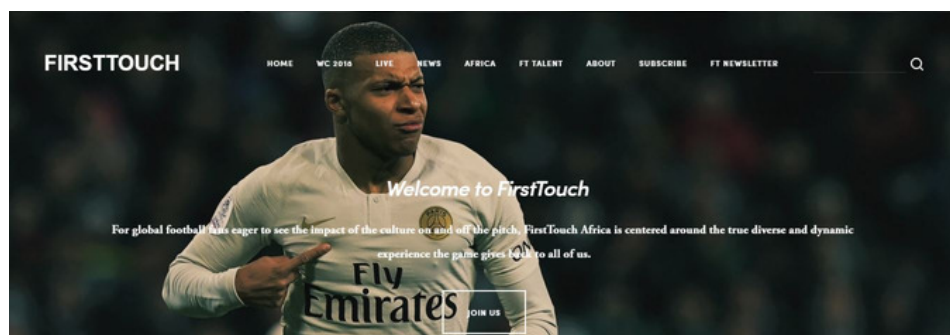
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Produced by FIRSTTOUCH FT



MALI'S ROAD TO 2019 U-20 AFCON GLORY

Written by: Margaret Mandeya

How did Mali make U-20 AFCON their tournament?

Mali's claimed continental glory in the U-20 AFCON finals against Senegal, beating the Senegalese (3-2) on penalties. The road to victory was modest but nonetheless entertaining and well orchestrated. This is how they became the champions of Africa!

Road to the Finals

Senegal v Mali

Senegal was the stronger of the two teams in the encounter, dismissing Mali 2-0. Mali's opener fell short of the team's potential; they failed to create chances. The lack of defensive rigor in the match led to Senegal netting two late goals.

Mali v Burkina Faso

Mali needed a win against Burkina Faso to keep them in the running for the title. A 52nd-minute goal from Mamadou Traore gave Mali a narrow 1-0 victory. Burkina Faso went on to lose 5-1 to Senegal, finishing last in group B.

Mali v Ghana

The final group match for Mali was played at Stade General Seyni Kountche in Niamey. Mali humbled Ghana to a 1-0 defeat, to qualify for the semi-finals. Hadji Drame scored in the second-half, dashing Ghana's hopes of qualifying for the U-20 FIFA World Cup.

Semi-Finals (Nigeria v Mali)

Mali's battle against the Flying Eagles of Nigeria promised to be tightly contested. Nigeria won group A with seven points ahead of South Africa. The game was played to a 1:1 stalemate, taking the game to extra time and the dreaded penalties. Mali won the ensuing penalties (3-4) sending the Flying Eagles packing, setting



Mohamed Diallo of Mali in action during the FIFA U-20 World Cup New Zealand 2015 Round of 16 match between Ghana and Mali at Wellington Regional Stadium on June 10, 2015 in Wellington, New Zealand. (June 9, 2015 - Source: Hagen Hopkins/Getty Images AsiaPac)

up a final with three-time runner ups Senegal.

It was that simple yet, how Mali managed to upstage the seven other teams in this tournament might be elusive to some.

The secret behind Mali's success

Defence tactics

The strategy of Mali's head coach was to play a defensive game. This style of play worked for Mali when it was needed the most. Although there are strong critics who argue that Mali's play is too defensive, the national coach, Mamoutou Kané "Mourlé" found a strategy that delivered the championship.

Returning champions

Mali's squad had eight players from the squad that won the U-17 AFCON in 2017. The dynamics of having more than two-thirds of experienced tournament winners who had already worked successfully as a team was an added advantage. A standout player who was part of the U17 AFCON winning team, Red Bull Salzburg forward Sekou Koita was the one of the more experienced in Mamoutou Kané's squad.

Mali, along with Senegal, Nigeria and South Africa, will play in the 2019 FIFA U-20 World Cup finals in Poland, commencing on the 23rd of May all through to 15th of June. Mali has proven that they have what it takes to win tournaments on the continent, the challenge will be to replicate their success on the world stage. Fingers crossed they continue to make history.





ESSAM EL HADARY, EL MAESTRO

Written By: Dennis Takendesa

My earliest memory of the legend dates back to 2008, I had been just introduced to the beautiful game of football and there he was, sitting on top of the goal post with his arms waving like a flag. Egypt had just won a second consecutive Africa Cup Of Nations title, I was told. Essam El Hadary was obviously leading the celebrations and even as an amateur in the game, I could tell that that form of celebrating was unconventional - the same I would later on learn about the player and indeed the rest of the world. At the age of 45 years and 161 days, the Egypt international became the oldest player to participate in a FIFA World Cup tournament in Russia 2018. It's not just about the age, that statistic paves way to explore the peculiarity of the goalkeeper, which happens to be something to behold.



THE EARLY YEARS

Essam was never meant to be a professional footballer, at least his parents thought so. Being born and raised in the home of a craftsman who owned his own furniture shop, El Hadary was almost expected to follow suit but rebelled even from an early age. He would play football behind his parents' back and wash the muddy clothes in a local river after every training session to keep his secret safe and secure. However

his talent and dedication outgrew the secret and got signed by a Second Division Club from his hometown, Damietta at the age of 17. He did it the not so easy way, running 7 km to training every single day and having to initially keep without gloves because they were a strange accessory to the teenager who had never worn a pair in his entire life. As they say, the rest is history. Those small habits of resilience, passion and commitment ingrained in that young boy would be enough to light up the path that led him to a world record-breaking career



THE CLUB YEARS

Essam El Hadary of Egypt reacts during the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia group A match between Saudia Arabia and Egypt at Volgograd Arena on June 25, 2018 in Volgograd, Russia. (June 24, 2018 - Source: Catherine Ivill/Getty Images Europe) The Ismaily goalkeeper has enjoyed an illustrious career with over 768 and counting appearances for 10 different clubs in mainly Egypt and partly Sudan, Sweden and Saudi Arabia. Essam El Hadary nicknamed the "High Dam," remains a guiding light to all of Africa, that playing in Europe is wonderful but one can be as good a success in any part of the world. In that period, he has won 8 Egyptian Premier

League titles, 4 Egypt Cups and Super Cups, 4 CAF Champions League titles and 3 CAF Super Cups, all with Al Ahly, the most successful football club on the African continent. The High Dam also left the foreign lands with some silverware to his name and happens to be one of the most decorated footballers on the continent, of all time!

PHARAOHS SKIPPER

The Pharaohs of Egypt are the most successful football nation in Africa and the legendary High Dam is a significant part of that story. The West-African nations of Ghana, Cameroon and Ivory Coast all know him too well as they took turns to be denied of the AFCON gold by the man between the sticks in the period running from 2006-2010. Egypt won 3 consecutive Africa Cup Of Nations trophies in that time stretching their record to 7 titles. Hadary was named goalkeeper of the tournament on all three occasions and can boast of a total of 4 AFCON titles to his name throughout his career. Having previously retired from international football, the goalie returned to the Pharaohs goal in 2014 against Bosnia, even going ahead to lead Egypt to the 2017 AFCON finals after saving two semi-final penalties, in typical El Hadary fashion. In Egypt's closing match at the 2018 world cup finals against Saudi Arabia, El Hadary made the much awaited debut as he played his first and monumental world cup match at 45 years of age. With the composure of a veteran, superman-like reflexes and legs difficult to tire, one could visibly see the traits that sustained such a beautiful career as he expertly saved one penalty before conceding a second one later on in the match.

With a total of 159 appearances, the High Dam became Egypt's third most capped player of all time and hung his Pharaohs gloves in August 2018. He is now 46-years-old and still plays professional football in Egypt's top flight league for Ismaily. El Hadary, El Maestro, will forever be a player etched in the books of history and our hearts as one of the greatest footballers the continent of Africa has ever seen.



SOUTH AFRICA'S LERATO CHABANGU: A BITTERSWEET STORY

Written By: Siphosethu Thwala

Former Bafana Bafana player Lerato Chabangu feels that he can get back on to the football pitch and play professionally once more. The former SuperSport United, Mamelodi Sundowns and Chippa United striker, who has also played for Bafana Bafana in his career, has recently been signed by Baberwa FC in the ABC Motsepe League. Chabangu penned down a six-month deal with the side and is hoping he can revive his career.

Chabangu's resurgence comes after a long spell off the field that was characterized by a plethora of struggles the player went through. These included excessive indulgence in alcohol, as well as uncontrollable reckless financial spending. Speaking in an interview in late 2018, Chabangu confessed saying, *"I do feel like I'm depressed. I comfort myself by watching TV. I disappointed lots of people. I was found in a wrong space, most of my friends were living in the township. I could say that I have destroyed myself, I can't really blame others. If you are at the wrong space, the negative things will catch you."*

But perhaps what is more interesting is how Chabangu rose to stardom and made him one of the greatest players South Africa has ever seen. At some point he was even linked with heavy interest from European teams. However, lack of financial discipline and professional discipline proved to be a setback in Chabangu's once glamorous career. Then he hit rock bottom. The stories that broke thereafter were rather sad considering the immense talent this player possesses. Chabangu conceded that reckless spending and lack of financial discipline got him into many problems such as booze and spending money on women.

The paradoxical nature of Chabangu's touching story sheds some life lessons that particularly football players can all adopt or be mindful of. On one hand it is the perfect epitome of the serious challenges faced by players with regards to various aspects such as financial education. Often times than not, teams only pay salaries to their players and distance themselves from what happens to the players when they reach retirement. This means that the onus is on the players to take charge of their finances after retirement, but, especially from an African context, one finds that footballers lack knowledge and expertise on how best they can get the most of their money whilst they are still playing.

Stories like Chabangu's therefore pose a challenge to players as well as clubs themselves to do more with regards to collaboration and helping players plan for life after football as early as when they start playing. By so doing, this will help avoid situations whereby players struggle and eventually enter dire situations like Chabangu did. What's your take on financial discipline in footballers? Should clubs do more?





TIME FOR GUEYE TO DEPART CONSISTENTLY AVERAGE EVERTON?

Written By: Dennis Takendesa



Everton football club has recently been such a club seeking to go up the ranks in the ever competitive English Premier League. It's been a journey that seems to be going in circular motion. What is it that they haven't tried? Splashing big money on players, hiring and firing managers, but their last top 4 finish dates back to the 2004-05 season. As to what direction the club who currently sits in 11th position takes next, only time will tell. One thing is for sure though, one of their most prized assets, Idrissa Gueye, has seemingly given a lot for the club and gotten not so much in return.

It's worth noting that the 29-year-old Senegalese tough tackling midfielder has consistently been the best defensive midfielder in the EPL ever since signing for the Merseyside club in 2016. Gueye has registered the highest number of tackles by a single player, twice in the four seasons and finished second in the other two. He has matched and beaten the likes of N'golo Kante and Nemanja Matic, stat to stat and yet remains without any silverware, very much on top of the list of many other unsung heroes in global football. In fact, on all occasions that Matic and Kante have been on the list, they won the league title with their teams, Matic in 2014/15 season with Chelsea and Kante with Leicester and Chelsea in the 2015/16 and 2016/17 season respectively. The midfield tackling role is central to a team's success and has proven to be the backbone of any side but Gueye hasn't had his efforts complimented with similar input by his Everton teammates. His record doesn't only make him England's finest but puts him in the bracket of the best defensive midfielders in the world if not the best because if he fits in the Kante category, who else comes before them? After all, Gueye may perhaps get a bigger stage for more wins and trophies in his so far impressive career.



French Ligue 1 side, PSG reportedly came close to acquiring the Senegalese in a £30 million deal in the 2019 January transfer window. The table topping Parisians who are on a quest to win their first ever UEFA Champions League trophy will unlikely rest until they get their man and the deal could be on this summer. PSG have few super talented and expensive players in their squad that includes Mbappe, Neymar and quite a handful of youngsters to complement them. Gueye could be one of the experienced talents to come in and work with the likes of Marco Verratti in the midfield as the French club continues to build itself up to be one of Europe's most dominant forces.

THIS MAY BE IWObI'S BEST CHANCE TO BUILD A LEGACY AT ARSENAL. CAN HE SEIZE IT?

Written By: Dennis Takendesa



The once mighty Arsenal, most infamous for the legendary invincibles season where they finished the 2003-04 Premier League season unbeaten and clinched the English top flight's ultimate prize, find themselves in a rebuilding phase.

Central to that process is the Spanish coach, Unai Emery who came in and got the boys running a little bit harder, literally. As the serial Europa League trophy winner, three times with Sevilla, seeks to implement his methods at the Emirates - he finds himself in a position where he has to wait for the necessary funding to acquire his preferred players and temporarily make do with what and who's available. One such player is the 22-year-old Arsenal Academy Graduate, who won 190 million hearts by choosing to represent Nigeria when he could have played for England's Three Lions. The young forward is at a point in his career where he could either grow to be one of the team's crucial players or slip at it and gets to be shipped off to some mid-table or less popular European club like many of the academy's graduates. He first broke into the first team at the age of 18 in 2015 and has since scored 12 goals and served up 17 assists in 110 appearances for the club. During Arsene Wenger's tenure, the Nigerian international was limited to playing first substitute to the world cup winner, Mesut Ozil and at times deployed on either wings to fill in for injured players or for the purposes of rotating the squad. Even then, his potential was palpable to all and had everyone keep their fingers crossed that the kid gets more chances to write his story, perhaps even follow or surpass the milestones reached by other Nigerians before him, I am talking about Arsenal's Nwankwo Kanu and his uncle, Austin "Jay Jay" Okocha. The latter, who was so good that the Leeds fans found his talent as an explanation for him to be named twice.

In Unai Emery's first season, Iwobi has already scored as much league goals as any of his past three Arsenal seasons with 3 goals and 4 assists in the league. More importantly, he is already just 3 more appearances shy of the highest total of 26 he got under Wenger for the past two seasons, with more than 10 matches left. Contextually, his 15 starts are actually one more than those of the talisman, Mesut Ozil. It's all largely due to the fact that Emery's game plan hinges on having pacey, pressing and direct wingers who can run up and down the pitch, which the club doesn't have in abundance. Iwobi possesses the required attributes but still struggles in getting the final ball right or clinically finishing chances. Unai has had to be more patient with the forward who played as a striker or an attacking midfielder for the better part of his young career. The Nigerian is likely to continue getting more chances at least until the Spanish manager gets his needed players which gives ample time for the forward to prove he belongs and that he can become a club legend. If he does it right, Emery will probably use the funds to strengthen other areas, especially the almost transparent defence wall, and we will be looking at probably 4 years in his current Arsenal contract of pure domination and Nigerian flair.

The chance obviously has an expiry date and it's up to Iwobi to beat the clock and claim his place. Will he?

THREE OF THE GREATEST COACHES AFRICA HAS EVER SEEN

Written By: **Simiso Shabangu**

Looking at the French team's World Cup success, statements like "Africa won the World Cup" were not absolutely shocking. This is because players of African descent or African players have made such an impact on the global football arena. That's an idea which has been warmly embraced across the globe. However, when we look at African football managers, the story there is far from this great one. There are not many outspoken African coaches but that does not mean they are not doing as good a job. Greatness is not defined by quantity. Below, we delve into discussing some of the great African managers that we seldom celebrate.



Aliou Cissé - Senegal

We are right to hear this name and be quick to associate it with the World Cup because the Senegalese coach was the only black coach at the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia. He was profiled for his stern attitude towards his players while making sure that details do not just pass his way without getting the attention they deserve. He was chosen for this position because he had also been a patriotic player who led his country to the quarter finals in the 2002 World Cup which was held in Japan and South Korea. His teammates have also attested to his not-willing-to-quit spirit that he possesses, even as a player. He is well able to transfer the same energy to his players by giving very inspiring speeches. The 42-year-old Cisse does not just choose the best squad but also knows how to filter his words and get the very best out of his troopers! We also got a bit of what the Senegalese players' daily bread tasted like when he was quoted saying, "Football is a universal sport and I represent a new generation that would like to have its place in African and world football." That is a sentiment we absolutely share with him.

Hassan "The Boss" Shehata - Egypt

Shehata led Egypt to win the Africa Cup of Nations three times in 2006, 2008 and 2010. When you win once, we can call it fate but when you just get it right three times, it means the talent in you is unquestionable. That is one thing that the now 71-year old legend can be remembered for. As a coach, he is good at making decisions, and standing by them even when they seem to be less popular. Many of us will recall his dispute with Mido after replacing the player 11 minutes until the end of the game in the 2006 semi-finals. The striker was so displeased at the gesture as he was optimistic of getting a goal before the final whistle. They came close to exchanging more than just harsh words, but Shehata was not moved. He had made a decision that not even harsh words or more could change.



Clive Barker - South Africa

He won the Africa Cup of Nations in 1996. This was particularly an important year for the whole of South Africa, who had just fought off the oppressive Apartheid regime in 1994. The country was of course in a feeble political state, and the trophy became the much needed revival. This goes a long way to show the kind of impact that soccer can have in unifying a nation. Beyond that glorious act in history, Barker also coached a number of clubs in South Africa. He won the Coca-Cola Cup with Amazulu in 1992. Under his leadership, the South African national team was ranked by FIFA as the best team in Africa and featured in the Top 20 teams worldwide in 1997. Under his leader-



Clive Barker - South Africa (continued)

-ship, the South African national team was ranked by FIFA as the best team in Africa and featured in the Top 20 teams worldwide in 1997.

No wonder they even qualified for the 1998 FIFA World Cup finals. Those are heights that the post-Apartheid South African children are yet to enjoy. Maybe if they only had Clive to lead them there!

Conclusion

It is always tempting to just give all the glory to the players, because they are the ones we see during the 90 minutes and forget the people who invest time in doing all the other work behind the scenes. In this piece, we remembered a fair share of some of the greatest coaches the continent has ever seen.

Clive Barker - South Africa
1994 - 1997



Aliou Cisse - Senegal
2015 - Present



Hassan "The Boss" Shehata - Egypt
2004 - 2011





AH AHLY: THE ROAD TO CONTINENTAL DOMINANCE

Written By: Simiso Shabangu

The hardest part about excellence is not attaining it, but it is sustaining it. To be continuously at the top, you do not need to take a chance at excellence, but it has to be in your DNA. That has been the case with Al Ahly and they were crowned as not just the Club of the Year, but the Club of the Century by the Confederation of African Football in 2000. They are arguably one of the most successful clubs in the world.

BEAUTIFUL HISTORY

Al Ahly was founded in 1907 as a way to unite young people from across high schools in Egypt who had become very instrumental in the fight against colonialism. Such intentional beginnings are ones that First Touch Africa celebrates as they are core to the reason why we celebrate football. We appreciate football for its ability to unite people from different walks of life towards a common goal. Even though the club was in Egypt, its first President was Mitchel Ince who was a British man. The club went on to unite 50 million fans outside of Egypt.

WINNING WAS NEVER BY CHANCE

Just after its inception, the club participated in the Sultan Hussein Cup which ran from 1917 to 1938 and won that competition 7 times. When the Egyptian Premier League was initiated in 1948, Ah Ahly won the championship until 1960. In total, they scooped the cup 39 times with some of these cups coming for 8 years in a row. As a fan, it means watching your team for years and not tasting disappointment like everybody else. It is such a soothing experience. Because success is not constricted by location, it is not surprising that when they took to the continental level, they won the African Champions League in 1982 and 6 times after that. When they play their games, they are able to attract as many as 74 000 in the Cairo's International Stadium.

BUSINESS IS AS CLEAN AS THE FOOTBALL THEY PLAY

Beyond the more than 100 accolades in 100 years that the club has been able to get, Al Ahly is also well commended for the way it is able to handle its business dealings with high standards of professionalism and integrity. Sometimes, we hear about under the table dealings that happen in other clubs, but Al Ahly was even dubbed as the "club of values" by its former president Salem Salim. It is always encouraging to know that behind a team's glory, there is also some glorious activities that enhance the reputation of the club.

Al Ahly's Ahmed Mohammed celebrates his winning goal during the international friendly match between AS Roma and Al Ahly on May 20, 2016 in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates.

STILL SOARING HIGH

Presently, the club is being coached by Martin Lasarte after they sacked their former coach Patrice Carteron. This was after they fell short at the face of Tunisia's Esperance in the CAF Champions League. This sacking is proof that excellence is a guarantee where there exists flexibility to change. As time goes, this club is all out to do well for itself in the continental sports arena.



FORGET THE AGE, GERVINHO IS HITTING TOP GEAR

Written By: Simiso Shabangu

Most fans' eyes are usually drawn towards the rising stars that are hitting the football arena with glory. These are the brilliant players that are usually in their early 20s and make you question what you have been doing with your life. We seldom forget that there are stars that have shining in the sky for a while and even made it possible for the young stars to see the path. Gervinho, has been so up in the sky for a while so much that other people thought that his light was getting dim, but he has reminded us that we should forget the age and pay attention to the top gear that he is hitting.

GLORIOUS DAYS

He recalls the day that he signed his Arsenal contract in 2011 like yesterday. In an interview, he said "Arsenal are the team that have left the biggest mark on me, without a doubt. I lived a dream. Any kid who starts playing can't help but to dream to play at a club like Arsenal. The day I signed, I cried." As an Arsenal player, he got exposed to other great players like Robin Van Persie and Santiago Cazorla. His growth was not just confined on the pitch, but he was able to also grow in his personal life as he got to be more tolerant and live outside of his home continent. Even though, he did not get win any accolades with Arsenal, he made 60 appearances. Even more importantly, playing for Arsenal had been his childhood dream so being at Arsenal meant much more to him, than anyone else. Moments of realizing your dreams are what makes life worth living.

HIS MOVE TO CHINA

He left Roma in 2016 to play for Hebei CFCC in the Chinese Super League. Many speculated that he was just warming into retirement with a fat cheque that he would get from the CSL. The granted, £345,000-per-week would impress any pocket that it would land on. While he was there, he did not just play for the sake of it, but he contributed to the growth of the Chinese Super League. When talking about his growth in China, he said, "In China, you need to be strong too: you can't feel like you are on vacation, you need to teach something to the next generations." This statement speaks to making sure that you play with impact. Returning With a Bang

After his contribution to the evolution of Chinese football, Gervinho returned to play with Parma in the Italian Serie A. You know how eagles get revived and behave like they are young again once they hit a certain age, that is exactly Gervinho. He has scored 8 goals in the 16 games that he has played in the Serie A for promoted Parma. He has surely become more than what he was when he left Roma for China. In Parma's draw with Juventus, 2 out of the 3 goals were a gift from him. He has also diligently used his back-heel signature technique to leave a mark during the matches.

RETURNING WITH A BANG

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CONCLUSION

Whoever said old age should be associated with deteriorating ability and questionable talent was gravely mistaken. There is something that can only be achieved when you have been in the game for sometime. Gervinho, 31, is showing the younger kids how it's done.



CELEBRATING THE PEOPLE'S CHAMPION, THEMBI KGATLANA

Written By: Margaret Mandeya

Thembi Kgatlana is the CAF 2018 African Woman Player of the Year, she's a powerful player on the pitch and has become a football sensation. Thembi Kgatlana might be young, but she is cementing her status among the list of the most elite African players. Thembi is currently one of the most exciting footballers to watch on the continent.

THE JOURNEY SO FAR

Kgatlana is a dynamic player with an impressive pace with which she dashes past defenders with ease. The 22-year-old has been instrumental in scoring winners for South Africa in their biggest tests. She put one past the Nigerian defence to secure a remarkable win for South Africa in their first group stage encounter and again in the semi-final win against Mali in Ghana. AWCON 2018 was an especially important moment in her career and has solidified her as one of Africa's top talents. Kgatlana netted 5 (the most goals for a player in the tournament) crucial goals that saw Banyana Banyana qualify for the world cup for the first time after coming close on many occasions. Nigeria took the AWCON title this year, but the top player of the tournament was definitely Kgatlana and she rightly took home the player of the tournament nod.

Thembi began playing football at the age of seven. Her mother admitted

that she was reluctant about her playing the game, but Kgatlana was convinced that she would be able to make something of herself in the game. Female players on the continent have to struggle with the added pressure of defying social norms that generally associate playing football as a masculine activity. There aren't as many opportunities for female players in South Africa, Kgatlana herself pinned most of her hopes for a professional career in foreign leagues.

Fast forward to February 2018, after admittedly a long wait, Kgatlana signed her first professional contract with the Texas National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) outfit, the Houston Dash from the University of Western Cape. She joined fellow Banyana teammates Linda Motlhalo and captain Janine van Wyk. In her first season in the NWSL, Kgatlana scored two goals in 16 appearances.

UPWARD AND FORWARD, SHE GOES

CAF Awards happen to be the biggest night for African football, celebrating the best of the best every year. Kgatlana was a big winner on the night, taking home Woman Player of the year as well as Goal of the Year awards. Considering the competition she was up against, including the 2017 winner Asisat Oshoala, it's abundantly clear that Thembi Kgatlana

owned 2018, both in terms of her AWCON performance and her first big professional move to the Houston Dash. She dedicated the award to women playing football in South Africa, also taking to Instagram to express her gratitude to *"every single one of you who has supported me through my highs and lows"*.

After the big wins for Kgatlana, the spotlight is on the young woman from Mohlakeng, Randfontein, who became the second South African after Noko Matlou in 2008 to win CAF Player of the Year. Off the pitch, like any other superstar athlete, she has a brand endorsement with Nike. We should expect much more to come from the Houston Dash Player both on and off the pitch. She will play a massive role when Banyana embark on their maiden World Cup campaign in France this July.



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