

ATHLETICS

Former world junior champion Ndiwa returns with a bang at Kisii meet

By SUNDAY NATION Team

Former world junior 8km cross country champion, Mangata Ndiwa, made a spectacular comeback after a career threatening injury to triumph at the third leg of the KCB Athletics Kenya meeting at the Kisii Golf Course, yesterday.

Jackline Chebii also claimed a big win in the 6km junior women's race after a difficult year. Chebii, who's based in Kericho, was dropped from last March's World cross country team to Edinburgh, while Japhet Korir made it two out of two races as he claimed the

honours in the 8km junior men's race with Armed Forces runner Irine Limika winning in the 8km senior women's event.

Ndiwa, the gold medal winner in Fukuoka in the 8km junior men's event, used his powerful last kick to clinch the senior men's 12km race. Micah Kogo led the pack from the start but relaxed with 200 metres to go to allow Ndiwa to come in first, clocking 37:10.0 while the former followed in 37:15.3.

Kogo, the Olympic 10,000 metres bronze medalist, had led from the stumps but slowed down at the sloop, giving Ndiwa space to break clear. "I'm happy to win the race despite getting stiff opposition from

the other athletes," said Ndiwa. Prisons' Timothy Kiptoo came third after clocking 37:17.9, while Bernard Rotich was fourth in 37:37.5.

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Challenging terrain

Irene Limika, fresh from World steeplechase where she came in fourth, clinched the 8km senior women's race in 29:02.20 and was followed by Purity Wangoi in 29:12.52, while Jackline Okemwa was third in 29:19.69.

Limika said the race was challenging as the route was tough, while the weather was extremely hot. "I'm happy to have won as I just got back home three weeks

ago from the US, where I was training," Limika said.

World cross country junior champion, Mercy Cherono, did not finish the 6km race pulling out after the 2km mark. Cherono, who was superb in Kericho and Wareng meetings, could not keep up the pace in a race won by Jackline Chebii of Kaso in 20:44.7, while Helda Chepkemoi of Kiptenden was second in 20:48.7, with her teammate Judith Chepkoech settling for third in 20:50.0. In the men's 8km race, Japhet Korir won in 24:12.0, with Fredrick Musyoki (24:38.0) and Charles Kibet 24:42.0 taking the second and third positions.

Galaxy of stars light up Kibera

Multiple champions join celebrated ER actor in Shoe4Africa charity game in slum

By CHRIS MUSUMBA

An embarrassment of talent was on show at the Kibera Primary School yesterday with a galaxy of the world's top marathon stars on parade on a sports-for-peace mission.

Interestingly, the multiple champions were not lining up for yet another marathon, but tried their hands, or legs if you like, in a charity football match against a Kibera women's football team under the Shoe4Africa charity initiative.

Former world marathon champion Paul Tergat, two-times London Marathon champion Martin Lel, four-times Boston Marathon winner Robert "Mwafrika" Cheruiyot, former Boston Marathon runner-up Christopher Cheboiboch and 1992 Olympic steeplechase gold medallist Mathew Birir were in the team that won the match 3-1.

Also fielded was 1987 world marathon champion Douglas Wakihuri, American television drama series, ER, actor Anthony Edwards, aka Dr Mark Greene and Shoe4Africa founder Toby Tanser.

The match followed a five-kilometre women's run which saw over 3,000 runners get free T-shirts and running shoes from Shoe4Africa who are on a fund raising mission to raise money to build a Sh1 billion children's hospital in Eldoret.

Athletics Kenya chairman Isaiah Kiplagat and 2007 Mombasa World Cross Country Championships' organising committee chief executive Isaac Kalua graced the occasion. Lel, who retained his London Marathon title in a fast finish this year, scored twice with Tanser getting the All-Stars' third goal in the exciting match at the Kibera Primary School.

The Kibera women's team was captained by Ruth Muinde who was handed over a T-Shirt specially sent to yesterday's match by Manchester United winger Cristiano Ronaldo, a Shoe4Africa special ambassador.

Learnt their language

Shoe4Africa, which is also supported by the world half marathon champion and world record holder, Lornah Kiplagat, together with other elite sports personality aims at helping raise funds to build the 250-bed hospital in Eldoret, which will be the largest children's hospital in Africa.

"This is nice being in able to share with them their experience. The few hours I have been here, I have learnt their language (slang) and we are here to show them that we too care. We need to cultivate a spirit of cooperation and make them realise that they too are still important in the society," said Kiplagat at Kibera yesterday.



Shoe4Africa All Stars team's Robert Cheruiyot dribbles past Carolina for Kibera defender Mercy Akinyi as teammate Martin Lel (left) closes in during their celebrity football match, yesterday. Left: All Stars goalkeeper Mathew Birir watches helplessly as the ball goes into the net. Right: All Stars' ER actor and golden globe award winner, Anthony Edwards, in action during the match. All Stars won 3-1. Photos/CHRIS OMOLLO

Tergat, said them showing up was crucial as it gives the girls of Kibera the hope in life that they too can achieve whatever they want as long as they have the determination and will to do it. "We also came from poor background under hard conditions yet we have defied the odds to do well in sports. It is never late and each one of them can surely make it to the top," he said. The charity event also had information sessions on HIV/Aids awareness. Ki-

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plagat said it was crucial to have the children and women know the value of life and be able to keep up society virtues.

"Many have little knowledge of Aids and such events help inform and educate them on how to stay healthy and focus on succeeding in life," she said.

Tanser, had said that running is the most celebrated sport in Kenya, yet there is a lack of knowledge and information surrounding HIV/Aids.

All clear for today's Nyeri half marathon

By SUNDAY NATION Reporter

The annual Safaricom Nyeri half marathon will be held today at the Kamukunji grounds with two time winner Nathaniel Kosgei expected to make a strong bid for a hat-trick.

The event, now in its 12th edition, has one of the best prize pool for its winners and has attracted huge following in the highlands of Central province. The race is a brain child of World marathon champion and four-time Boston marathon champion, Catherine Ndereba. Ndereba, who hails from Gatung'anga area, also the silver medallist at the Beijing Olympics.

Anthony Maina, a member of the organising committee, confirmed that Kosgei will be back Nyeri to launch a bid for his third win. He, however, must brace himself for a bruising battle with the 2005 Standard Chartered Nairobi marathon winner, Hosea Rotich, who has also confirmed his participation.

"Getting former winners to come back is a huge bonus and inspiration to others that they too can make it. However, this year, it is likely to be a close shot to call in the races as runners seek to improve on their times as the season starts," said Maina.

Strong candidate

In the women's race, last year's champion Sally Chemutai, runners-up Magdalene Syombua and Monica Wangare, have not confirmed their participation.

However, this has not watered down the level of competition as another prodigy, Jane Wamucii, has emerged as a strong candidate to stake the claim to the event.

Wamucii will be making her first appearance in the race, having just returned last week from the United States where she had an impressive spell in road running.

"She is what we need. This event is all about giving the youth a chance to race at the top level at their won backyard. Wamucii is expected to give the steel and challenge that will push any elite runner to the limit," said Maina.

Ndereba, who is back in the country after a series of races, from the New York marathon - where she was fifth - Japan and Melbourne, will be available to grace the event and inspire the young runners to take up athletics as a career.

The half marathon winner will take home Sh50,000, runner up Sh25,000 while the third placed athlete in the half marathon will pocket Sh20,000.

Apart from the half marathon there will also be a 10km road race for both men and women and a children fun race.