ATHLETICS

By SUNDAY NATION Team

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

Former world junior silver cross country champion, Mengata Ndiwa, made a spectacular return back after a career threatening injury to triumph at the third leg of the KCB Athletics Kenya meeting at the Kisii Golf Course, yesterday.

Jackie Cheruiyot also claimed a big win in the 6km junior women’s race after a difficult year. Cheruiyot, who is based in Kericho, was dropped from last March World cross country team to Edinburgh, where Albert Korir made it two out of two races as he claimed the honours in the 5km junior men’s race with Armed Forces runner Irene Limika winning in the 5km senior women’s event.

Ndiwa, the gold medal winner in Pokhara in the 6km junior meet’s event, used his powerful last kick to clinch the senior men’s silver. Michael Kipruto led the pack from the start but relaxed with 200 metres to go to allow Ndiwa to come in first. Ndiwa was followed in 37:15.

Challenges terrain

Irene Limika, fresh from World steeplechase, where she came fourth, clinched the 6km senior women’s race in 29:02.20. Sponsoring her was GDF (SNC) while the winner followed in 29:15.3.

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The route was quite challenging and the weather hot

All clear for today’s Nyeri half marathon

By SUNDAY NATION Reporter

The annual Safaricom Nyeri half marathon will be held today at the Kamakwa grounds with two time winner Nathaniel Korir 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 meet is part of the World marathon championship and four-time world half-marathon champion, Mercy Cherono, who won the event in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, will be joined by senior championship medallists in the event.

The meet, also takes place at the same time the season started,” said Maina.

Strong candidates

In the men’s category, last year’s champion Sally Chebitu, runners-up Magdalene Sanyeva and Monica Wangare, have not confirmed their participation.

However, this has not watered down the level of competition as both pro and amateur. June Wanjiru, has emerged as a strong candidate to stake a claim to the event.

Wanjiru, who has made 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 in their won backyard. Wanjiru is expected to give the steeplechase a challenge that will push any elite runner to the limit,” said Maina.

Wanjiru, who is a four-time national steeplechase champion, will be looking to take on athletes as a career.

The half marathon winner will take home Shs200,000, second placed runner will take home Shs100,000 while the third placed athlete in the half marathon will pocket Shs60,000.

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

Galaxy of stars light up Kibera

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

By CHIS MUSUMBA

A n embarrassment of talent was on show at the Kibera Primary School yesterday with a galaxy of football stars joining the annual stars on parade on a sports-for-peace mission.

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

Former world marathon champion Paul Tergat, two-times London Marathon champion Martin Kej, four-times Boston Marathon winner Robert "Moure" Cheruiyot, former Boston Marathon runner-up Christopher Cheruiyot and 2009 Olympic 10,000 metres gold medalist Matthew Birtier were in the team that won the match 2-0.

Also added was 1997 world marathon champion Douglas Wakolbinger, American television drama series, ER, actor Anthony Edwards, aka Dr Mark Greene and Shoe4Africa founder Robin Roberts.

The match followed a five-kilometre women’s race where over 4,000 runners got free T-shirts and running shoes from Shoe4Africa who are on a final raising mission to hit the $1 billion children’s hospital in Eldoret.

Athletics Kenya chairman Isaiah Kiplagat and 2007 Mombasa World Cross Country Championships’ organising committee chief executive Isaac Kibua graced the occasion.

Tergat, who returned his London Marathon title in a fast finish this year, scored twice with Tanser getting the All-Star’s third goal in the exciting match at the Kibera School.

The Kibera women’s team was captained by Ruth Munro who was handled over a T-Shirt specially sent to yesterday’s match by Manchester United Wingy Cristiano Ronaldo, a Shoe4Africa special ambassador.

Learn their language

Shoe4Africa, which is also supported by the world half marathon championship and world record holder, Lornah Kiplagat, together with other elite sports personality aims at helping raise funds to build the 200-bed hospital in Eldoret, which will be the largest children’s hospital in Africa.

"This is not only about raising money but also sharing with them their experience. The few hours I have I would love to speak to them in the language (English) 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.

Tergat, said them showing up was crucial as it gives the youth 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 learnt 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. Kiplagat 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 educated 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.