

COMETSA RESEARCH PROJECT: Village Football Clubs – South Africa

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COMETSA Jane Furse Sekhukhune FC (Pty) Ltd

Researcher: Sam Tsim



COMETSA

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CHAPTER 1/SCENE 1 - BACKGROUND: COMETSA Jane Furse Sekhukhune FC (Pty) Ltd is not a typical football club that chases after becoming a professional outfit playing in the prestigious football leagues. We are a business organization, a company with interest in the business of football in all its aspects.

Our organization, COMETSA, has achieved amazing results, especially the career growth of our member players of our development initiatives since our founding date, the 1st August 1997.

We have now transferred those development programmes and initiatives to our non-profit development agency, COMETSA Sports Development Agency – NPO (Registration No. 2001/005048/08).

We do however recognise the fact that football as sport belongs to the official associations governed by the global laws of the game, under FIFA. In South Africa, football is the responsibility of the South African Football Association (SAFA), and at the local levels it is through SAFA Local Football Associations (LFA) structures. We respect and recognise these football structures. In fact, in 2014, COMETSA Sports Development Agency – NPO received funding from the German Development Agency, GIZ, to run a series of Youth Development through Football (YDF) sessions. COMETSA identified the SAFA Tshwane’s Mabopane Local Football Association (LFA) as one of the beneficiaries of these initiatives. We conducted the YDF programme for their clubs coaches and issued certificates on completion of the programme. We would love to continue such collaborations with the football associations through our COMETSA Sports Development Agency – NPO

COMETSA Jane Furse Sekhukhune FC (Pty) Ltd, is focusing on the commercial aspects of the business of football. Our interest is the local town of Jane Furse and the region of Sekhukhune District Municipality in Limpopo Province of South Africa. Jane Furse is one of the fastest growing peri-urban towns in South Africa. In fact Jane Furse is officially designated to become a city of the future. The platinum mining region of Burgersfort justifies this strategic goal for Jane Furse. In the future we will be proudly talking about Jane Furse City in Sekhukhune District Municipality, Limpopo Province. We hope that COMETSA Jane Furse Sekhukhune FC (Pty) Ltd will be counted among those organizations that would have contributed to the achievement of this vision.

PROJECT EXTENSION TO OTHER REGIONS: It is our plan to extend this project to other regions of South Africa, once we have succeeded in building a strong base reference in the Greater Sekhukhune Region in Limpopo Province. In fact, our main objective is to exchange the village football clubs heritage of the various regions in South Africa. We strongly believe that this is the most important piece of the South African football that is rich with culture that can be shared with the football sector globally.

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This brings me to the topic **COMETSA Research Project – Village Football Clubs (South Africa)**. I grew up in this Jane Furse area, as a herd-boy, scholar, and village football fanatic, playing for Moripane Scientists FC, a village football club at Moripane village, Ga- Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru wa Mamone.

I grew up following some of the great village football clubs with colourful names (brands) that mobilised the village boys. Our first exposure to football was through these village football clubs. We are the scholars and graduates of village football in the Greater Sekhukhune Region before we could become supporters and fans of the now famous South African clubs like Kaizer Chiefs, Orlando Pirates, Moroka Swallows, Pretoria Callies, Benoni United, Zulu Royals, etc. In fact, we knew of these South African great clubs and brands through radio broadcasts, i.e. ka leihlo la moya. So, if my local village football club was playing, and at the same time on radio there was a broadcast of Kaizer Chiefs vs Orlando Pirates, we would opt for our local village football club game. That is how strong local village football was in the Greater Sekhukhune Region in the 70s, 80s and 90s.

The closest we were to South African big football teams was through the emergence of Limpopo football clubs like Seshego Stone Breakers FC, Seshego City Carlton FC, Seshego Saints FC, Mahwelereng Real Rovers FC, and when Boleu Negroes FC in Tafelkop hosted the first professional team in Greater Sekhukhune Region, Kaizer Chiefs FC. This is the game which Chiefs used to introduce their legendary Nelson “Botsotso” Dladla to its supporters. This is how Kaizer Chiefs grew their support base in the Greater Sekhukhune Region.

The tradition of going on away game trip is memorable. The singing as warriors of our village football clubs was to intimidate the host club. Many of these village football clubs were known by their trip war songs. We were very jealous of our songs being copied by rival village football clubs. When the games were big, like tournaments, we would organize additional transport for our ladies supporters, who would add more power to intimidating host clubs. And of course there was non-stop singing by the ladies throughout the match, giving a boost to their team. They will sing, calling the names of their team players throughout the game. When the strategy would not work, they would assemble behind the opposition team’s goals to unsettle their goalkeeper with the noise; hopefully he would lose concentration and let the ball in. Sometimes this strategy would backfire as it would only serve to motivate the opposition goalkeeper to work even harder, and even win the ladies over. I remember myself as a youngest goalkeeper defying the intimidation of the ladies of Makalaneng Smodern village football club. At the end of the game I had won favour of one of the ladies, who wanted to come with our team, Moripane Scientists FC. Of course, I was still very young and she was older, and I would not know what to do with her. This was the craziness of village football in Greater Sekhukhune Region then. I wonder what happened to this fanatic practice!

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We were also fortunate in that the Greater Sekhukhune Region started building a number of high schools, which attracted players from far places like the South. High schools like Malekutu High School, Bopedi Bapedi High School, Matsebong High School, Phatametsane High School, Hlogo Tlou High School, etc, attracted scholars from other parts of South Africa who contributed immensely to the regional village football. These scholars played for the village football clubs on weekends. They became celebrity football players in the villages.

Here are my greatest ever legendary village football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Region. You will notice that almost all of them have their names starting with the name of the village where they come from. Look at the creativity of the naming of these village clubs. Through these names you can realise the influence from other regions of South Africa. Radio broadcast contributed to this creativity;

CHAPTER 2/SCENE 2 - MORIPANE SCIENTISTS FC, formerly nick-named “Lekatika Loss My Cherrie”, based at Moripane Village: At Moripane Scientists FC, we had visiting scholar players like, the late “Pro” Tlaka from Tafelkop Boleu Negroes FC, Alex “Sugar Ray” Matheba, Ellington “Kaizer” Matheba, Phaphedi “Babsy” Ramushu, etc. This was despite the animosity between village football clubs in those days. It was unheard of to live in one village, and then play for a different village football club. In actual fact, it was scandalous to do so. You would not even openly date a lady from another village. That is why Moripane village club was originally called, Moripane Lekatika Loss My Cherrie FC. Of course, we changed this name in the 80s when my generation felt that it was not a constructive name. Other village clubs were very scared of visiting our village club for games. We were for ever going on away games and not getting return matches. And this is how games were organized in those days. You had to go and play away to host returns home games. Our games record was always out of balance. We had also started recruiting players from other villages. The name change was proposed by Mr Obed “Sugar Ray” Mohlala and I. Obed and I used to travel daily on foot to Malekutu High School at Ga-Sekwati, Mamone. We would be discussing our football village club issue all the way. One day we discussed our village club name. Of course we were the emerging young intellectuals in the village. The name Scientists came to our minds. We wondered how we would explain this intellectual name to the other members of the village club. So, we translated it into Sepedi, which means Bo-Ramahlale, The Scientists. They loved the name. The rest is history. The club remained Moripane Scientists FC. There is no club in Greater Sekhukhune Region calling themselves by this name. This has been creativity at its best. We love this club. It has produced many of us. Generations after generations have played for it, and the journey continues. We are planning to issue certificates of recognition to all those who played for Moripane Scientists FC, alive and those who have passed on. This would be a thank you to them for passing on the football Heritage of this small village in Greater Sekhukhune Region to the rest of us.

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JUNIOR FEEDER VILLAGE FOOTBALL CLUB – Moripane Mosehleng Shinning Stars FC: I started Mosehleng Shinning Stars FC at Moripane village during my youth years. I still remember how most of us emerged into the senior village club, Moripane Scientists FC, with our nick names we gave ourselves at the junior village football clubs. Such names were influenced by radio broadcasts and we would adopt some of the great stars names, even though we had not met them before. For example, I nick-named myself, Malombo, and I did not even know what the name meant. I just liked Jan “Malombo” Lichaba of Pretoria Callies FC, who later joined Kaizer Chiefs FC, and played along the great players like Patrick “Ace” Ntsoelengoe. My cousin was nick-named “Ten Ten” after the great Petrus “Ten Ten” Nzimande of Kaizer Chiefs FC. Until today he is just known as Dan “Ten Ten” Patjane. At Moripane Scientists FC the names were also given by our greatest fan number one, Mr Maruane Mphela. He was a football poet and orator of note. He gave names to players like: Robert “China the Communist” , King-Korn Mothwana Pelo e Nnyane, Amos “Danger” Patjane, “Sour” Rantho, Ntshirane “King Soff” Masemola, “Matanya a Tanyolla” Lekgogola, “Banda” Kubjane, “Super 7” Lekgogola, “Swiswaneng La Maru a Pula” Lepota, Sydney “The Horse” Mahlase,

CHAPTER 3/SCENE 3 - JANE FURSE HIGHLANDERS FC: this club was based at Jane Furse peri-urban area and at some stage run by one of the progressive white person who worked at Jane Furse Memorial Hospital then. For him, this was just a social responsibility. For the people of Jane Furse, this was a serious proud project. We were all emotionally attached to this prestigious football club. Some of its players worked at Jane Furse Memorial Hospital. It was the pride of Jane Furse and the region. This is the club that had a potential to become the first professional football club from Greater Sekhukhune Region. Unfortunately, football in South Africa had not reached the level it is at today. And the country was fighting to be liberated from the horrible oppressive Apartheid system of Government, which sought to crush anything that was about advancement of black people. We are glad that one of the former and legendary football players of Jane Furse Highlanders FC, Mr Speelman “Ace” Sekwati, is the current President of SAFA Sekhukhune Local Football Association (LFA).

CHAPTER 4/SCENE 4 - MOKWETE MORNING STARS FC: The club from the small village of Mokwete outside Jane Furse. This village was originally called Doornkop, named after the area where its residents came from in Middelburg, when under Apartheid’s forced removals policy, they were brought here. The club was one of the weakest in the region until the entrepreneur, Mr Selala, took over the club. He sponsored the club, and brought great players to the club. Another community forced removed from Marble Hall was resettled in the Mokwete village. This tended to be a benefit to Mokwete Morning Stars FC. They had some of the great players. Mr Selala was a passionate football lover and supporter. The Riba family that also settled in the village added more to the football growth in the village. Their children who were studying in various colleges came over for weekends with friends from high schools and colleges like Bopedi Bapedi High School, Lemana College of Education, Sekhukhune College of Education, Mamokgalake Chuene College of Education, etc. They would use their transport to ferry the

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players and accommodate them at their parents' houses at their shops. This was a phenomenon in the region. All of the sudden Mokwete Morning Stars FC became an admirable village football club. They had arrived in the league of the clubs like Jane Furse Highlanders FC, Sekwati Try Again FC, Madibong Sweepers FC, Vleischboom Linti Fast Eleven FC, Marishane United Brothers FC, Mojalefa FC, etc. Mr Selala was an orator and entertainer of note. While his team would be getting ready at his shop, having been picked up in his bakkie from the field at half-time of the B-team game, as intimidation, he would be walking around the soccer field, loudly calling his team of the day name by name. As young followers of the beautiful game, we could not help it but to walk along him listening to the great names of the players he was calling, some we know of, like: DnD The General, Matwetwe Twee –Twee (Ngaka Ya Bopedi Ya Mahlo Matala), Paulvy “Lemana College”, “Maria –Maria”, “Cha-Cha Chando”, etc. Whenever Mokwete Morning Stars FC was playing Sekwati Try Again FC, you could be assured that none of us would go to the field to look after cattle. We will leave the cattle unattended just to watch a local derby football game.

CHAPTER 5/SCENE 5 - MORETSELE WANDERERS FC: The village of Moretsele is almost an extension of Jane Furse, the place originally known as Mashadi, belonging to the people Kgosi Matlala, who were forced removed to Tsimanyana, near Marble Hall. I do not have much specifics about this village football club. I invite those who know much about this village club's history to come forward with the facts and share that with us.

CHAPTER 6/SCENE 6 - MORABA OCEAN SWALLOWS FC: Ga-Moraba village is another village that is an extension of Jane Furse. Moraba Ocean Swallows FC is one of the historical clubs in Jane Furse. One of their former players, Mr Lwalane Moraba, is one of the directors of COMETSA Friends & Supporters Club – NPO. He is going to be very helpful in this long-term research project in village football.

CHAPTER 7/SCENE 7 - DITSHWEUNG FC: Ditshweung village is one of the very small villages in Jane Furse. Ditshweung FC is one of the village clubs did not exist for a long time. I wonder if there is much left to write about this village club.

CHAPTER 8/SCENE 8 - MADIBONG SWEEPERS FC: The pride of Jane Furse after Jane Furse Highlanders FC is Madibong Sweepers FC, from Madibong village in Jane Furse. It was one of the household village football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Region. Of course, Madibong village is my new home, after my mother was married by the Tsimas, and I had to relocate from Moripane village to Madibong village. I am, however, seeing myself as belonging to both Moripane and Madibong villages. Even my full name is Samuel Patjane Tsimas. Patjane is my mother's maiden name, which I associate with Moripane village, the home of my grandparents. I associate Tsimas with Madibong village.

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CHAPTER 9/SCENE 9 - MADIBONG DINOKO FC: The village of Madibong is one of the biggest villages in Jane Furse. It is not surprising that over and above Madibong Sweepers FC, we also have another village football club, Madibong Dinoko FC. It however, never reached the level of Madibong Sweepers FC. But it is a traditional village football club in Madibong. It certainly plays a key role in the region. It offers alternative to those who do not have a reason to join Madibong Sweepers FC.

CHAPTER 10/SCENE 10 - MADIBONG MAGAPUNG FC: This is the latest addition to the village football in Madibong village. My two brothers, Mike Mabushe Tsimba and Patrick Tsimba, were involved in the formation of Madibong Magapung FC. Magapung means the place of Watermelons, since the football grounds are deep among the fields of Madibong. This village club is still active today, especially during holidays. They have just hosted a tournament this year, 2015, Christmas holidays. It is a young history in village football and it is still fresh in the minds of the villagers of Madibong.

CHAPTER 11/SCENE 11 - MANGANENG BATAU YOUNG KILLERS FC: Manganeng village happens to be the original home of my late grandfather, Mr Jimson Phaphedi Patjane. The village football club, Manganeng Batau Young Killers FC, is one of the clubs that I feared most, as a player of Moripane Scientists FC. During my time, we have never defeated them. Their players were just too athletic for our standard. Interestingly, most of their players were my relatives. The Patjanes are originally Mashegwana from Ga-Kgosi Mashegwana in Schoonoord. They became refugees in Manganeng and changed their surname from Mashegwana to Patjane. My grandfather, his brother, Kgobise Patjane, and many others emigrated to Ga-Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru, Mamone, as a result of tribal wars. Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru welcomed the Patjanes and many other immigrants from Manganeng village, but did not integrate them into his tribe. They were located at their fields (Mashemong ka Moripane, the name of the small river), hence, the name Moripane village. The two villages, Moripane and Manganeng, remained in contact until today. My grand-father became the messenger between Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru and Kgosi Nkadimeng of Manganeng village, until he passed away. I need to research about the great former players of Manganeng Batau Young Killers FC.

CHAPTER 12/SCENE 12 - SCHOONOORD CHIEFS FC: I know very little about Schoonoord Chiefs FC, except that it is one of the most spoken about village football clubs that was based at Schoonoord Magistrate area in the 70s and 80s. This is another research candidate. Schoonoord is one of the two oldest magistrates' areas in Greater Sekhukhune Region. The other one is Nebo Magistrate Region. They had both police stations and magistrate courts in the region for a very long time. Schoonoord Chiefs FC was therefore based at a very important judiciary site of the Greater Sekhukhune Region.

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CHAPTER 13/SCENE 13 - SEKWATI TRY AGAIN FC: What a legendary village football club from Greater Sekhukhune Region! Sekwati Try Again FC was officially allowed to use the name of Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru as their name. They were sponsored by the tribe. They would use the famous blue truck called Pedi-Mamone to go to the games. Every visit by Sekwati Try Again FC was like a royal visit, as the Pedi-Mamone carried the royalty stature. Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru loved Sekwati Try Again FC. He attended their home games. He used to be an inspiration to the players. He was known not to take defeat lightly. Apparently when the team was playing home, and were appearing to be losing the match, he would leave the soccer grounds and go to his royal house. Before he leaves he would give the team the message to come and report a win to him at the end of the game. This would pressurise the team to work harder as they would not want to face His Majesty after a loss. Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru was a serious and disciplinarian leader. So, his subjects, including the players, respected and took him very serious.

CHAPTER 14/SCENE 14 - MAOTWA KGOMO FC, pronounced as Maoto a Kgomo: This is one of the two great rival village football clubs at Ga-Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru, Mamone village. The other team is Sekwati Try Again FC. Maotwa Kgomo FC was based at Ga-Mohlala village, a sub-village of Mamone village, under the chieftaincy of Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru. Maotwa Kgomo literally translated means the Legs of a Cow. This club was really a force in the Greater Sekhukhune Region. When Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru built Malekutu High School at Mamone, the club became one of the direct beneficiaries as they welcomed a lot of great scholar players from other regions, including from the South. I would love to see a great brand like Maotwa Kgomo FC being revived. My village football club, Moripane Scientists FC, struggled to defeat Maotwa Kgomo FC.

CHAPTER 15/SCENE 15 - RANTHO TIP TOP FC: Ga-Rantho is a small village at Ga-Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru. I came into contact with Rantho Tip Top FC during my school years at Malekutu High School. Most of their players were my school mates. It was a small village football club with big hearts. They never wanted to be relegated to the bottom list of the village football clubs at Ga-Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru area.

CHAPTER 16/SCENE 16 - MAGOLANENG BARAGWANA FC: Magolaneng is also a small village at Ga-Kgosi Sekwati Mampuru. Our village football club, Moripane Scientists FC, when was still called Moripane Lekatika Loss My Cherrie FC, liked to visit Magolaneng Baragwana FC. My late uncle, Mr Zebra Patjane, used to coordinate such games. I have not heard much about Magolaneng Baragwana FC in the modern day football era. It might have been confined to the history books. But I am not sure if the story was written. Hence, we want to include Magolaneng Baragwana FC in this research project.

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CHAPTER 17/SCENE 17 - MAMONE BEREAF C: Ga-Kgosi Sekwati, Mamone village is big and had so many active village football clubs to can run its own local football league. One such late addition was Mamone Berea FC, which was based in the new section of Maroteng Ga-Sekwati. It is called Mamone Berea FC. I remember their legendary player called Shuffle, who was my school mate at Malekutu High School. My friend and also school mate, Mr Tjabadi, could not stop talking about Mamone Berea FC, at school. This was until Moripane Scientists FC visited them and defeated them terribly to Mr Tjabadi's big surprise.

CHAPTER 18/SCENE 18 - MAMONE DINOKO FC: Another latest addition to Ga-Sekwati, Mamone, village football clubs. This community was forced removed from Ga-Mmela, Jane Furse, to this section of Ga-Sekwati, Mamone. The Apartheid government gave the reason that they were situated on top of the mine deposits that they were going to mine at some future stage. Today their original area is re-occupied by other residents and no mining ever took place. So many families were broken down during the forced removal. Nevertheless, those who moved to Ga-Sekwati, Mamone, reorganized themselves, and the village football club, Mamone Dinoko FC, was one of the symbols of their new life.

CHAPTER 19/SCENE 19 - MANYAKA YOUNG CHIEFS FC: Ga-Manyaka is one of the small and yet oldest villages of Ga-Sekwati, Mamone, village. Today the village is surrounded by the fastest growing villages toward Jane Furse and Ga- Mohlala. We are proud to mention that Manyaka Young Chiefs FC is one of those village football clubs that participates in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region Development Football Exchange Programme.

CHAPTER 20/SCENE 20 - APEL-CROSS HUNGRY LIONS FC: The new section of the great village of Ga-Masemola is Apel-Cross village at Lepelle. Once again, we are proud to mention that Apel-Cross Hungry Lions FC is one of those village football clubs that participates in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region Development Football Exchange Programme. We know this young village football club very well. It cannot claim to have contributed much to the history of village football in Greater Sekhukhune Region, but their participation in our development football exchange programme makes them crucial for continuity. They are really a 90s club rather. But Ga-Masemola village's history in village football cannot be ignored. We will broaden our research work in this great Batau village.

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CHAPTER 21/SCENE 21 - PHOTO ROMAN RANGERS FC: Another legendary village football club based at Ga-Moloi wa Madihlaba village, outside the Glen-Cowie Roman Missionary in Greater Sekhukhune Region, hence the name Photo Roman Rangers FC. The team was sponsored by the Romans at Glen-Cowie Missionary, and was named as such. The Roman Missionary did a lot of community development programmes in the area, until they were disrupted by the Apartheid government's hate for black advancement. They build the famous Guardian Girls School, Glen-Cowie Memorial Hospital, Glen-Cowie Mill, and did a lot of farming in the area. All these great things, including the sponsorship of the village football club at Ga-Moloi wa Madihlaba were stopped by Apartheid government. What a pity! This is the same story as Jane Furse Highlanders FC and Jane Furse Memorial Hospital. I am fortunate that I was able to see the last years of the great Photo Roman Rangers FC, including playing along one of their late great players called Kaizer Komane. In his late years, Kaizer Komane, joined Moripane Scientists FC. It was an honour for us to welcome him at Moripane Scientists FC. We will forever honour him for what he did for our village football club. Before joining us he also played for the famous Molepane Blue Jaguars FC.

CHAPTER 22/SCENE 22 - MARISHANE UNITED BROTHERS FC: This great intellectual football club due to development brought by Bopedi Bapedi High School was famously known as MUBS (for Marishane United Brothers FC). I regard this village football club as an intellectual village football club since most of its players were teachers and high school scholars from Bopedi Bapedi High School, known as BB, which was a boarding school. This was the advantage as it had scholars from many parts of South Africa, and they had time to dedicate to playing football and doing their studies. Their players would speak English in the field as they would be having players from other parts of the country who would not communicate fluently in Sepedi, or sometimes it was just natural as teachers to speak in English. I guess that this was also a strategy to use big terms to confuse the opposition. But, for sure, MUBS was a mean-machine of village football in Greater Sekhukhune Region. I wonder what happened to this great team.

CHAPTER 23/SCENE 23 - MASHABELA DIPHIRI FC: The Ga-Mashabela village along the Ngwaritsi River is a famous village football club. “Ke diphiri tsa mmakakola sebata. Diphiri tsa fihla bosigo manamane a timela”. That is how they call themselves. Mashabela Diphiri FC is one of the clubs that have participated in COMETSA football exchange programmes between Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region. We would like to see this relationship continuing. We will certainly identify a research counterpart at Ga-Mashabela to capture the story of Mashabela Diphiri FC.

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CHAPTER 24/SCENE 24 - STRYDKRAAL HIGHLANDERS FC: Strydkraal is a village outside Apel cross. Strydkraal Highlanders FC like Mashabela Diphiri FC participated in COMETSA football exchange programmes between Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region. One of their leaders, Mr Mokwana is a keen supporter of COMETSA football development programmes. We are glad that he is now a teacher in Jane Furse. He will remain a link in this research project as we want to know more about the history of Strydkraal Highlanders FC.

CHAPTER 25/SCENE 25 - MARULANENG HAPPY BOYS FC: This village football club remains the historical milestone of the village of Marulaneng. I got to know more about Marulaneng Happy Boys FC during my attending of the traditional “mountain school” – circumcision ritual, at Ga-Kgosi Phetedi. I interacted with many of the players of Marulaneng Happy Boys FC, like their famous player, Benji. The passion and fire in their eyes, when they spoke about their village football club, caught my attention. It is certainly a historical village club we would like to research more and add to the Greater Sekhukhune Region village football write up and documentary. South Africa has not done enough to learn about the tradition of village football movement. Greater Sekhukhune Region should become the beginning of this initiative to learn the true basis of the South African football.

CHAPTER 26/SCENE 26 - PHAAHLA TIGERS FC: Another village football club to have participated in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region development football exchange programme. Phaahla Tigers FC is from Ga-Phaahla, a village along Ngwaritsi River, neighbour to Ga-Marishane and Ga-Mashabela villages. We are still to uncover the history of Phaahla Tigers FC. But we know that this village football club has been around for a very long time. Those in the know will definitely come forward with historical facts.

CHAPTER 27/SCENE 27 - MOGORWANE OCEAN SWALLOWS FC: The village of Mogorwane has grown from few households to one of the fastest growing villages in the Greater Sekhukhune Region. It is actually becoming an integral part of Greater Jane Furse City, in the making. Their team used to be the whipping boys of the region. Today with the village grown so big, I cannot imagine that the situation is still the same. They remained traditional friends of Moripane Scientists FC. The two villages share a lot in common. We expect Mogorwane Ocean Swallows FC to continue growing into one of the strategic village football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Region. I am looking forward to talking closely to the team and the legends of the village.

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CHAPTER 28/SCENE 28 - DITSHWENENG FC: The name Ditshweneng is self explanatory. This village is one of the very few villages that are deeply embedded in the mountain range of Molapo wa Pula between Ga-Moloi wa Madihlaba and Ga-Marishane field villages. The word Ditshweneng means the Place of the Baboons. Indeed, there is a lot of baboons in this mountain range. This is where most of us grew going to fetch wild fruits. We would always found ourselves tussling for these wild fruits with the baboons. If you are not careful and you wander alone, they would mock attack you. Ditshweneng FC is one of the youngest teams in the region. Today the village has grown bigger and has gone out of the mountain valley into the open. The Ditshweneng and Mogorwane villages are growing toward each other, geographically.

CHAPTER 29/SCENE 29 - RIVERSIDE BLACK LIONS FC, later Riverside General Stars FC: The name Riverside is common in South Africa and globally. The river that is the source of this Riverside name, here, in Jane Furse is Ngwaritsi River. So we are talking of Riverside village of Jane Furse. This is a very young village. It is the first village in Jane Furse that was build according to a plan. The stands were cut and people had to apply for stands, which became their address. Today, this is the common practice in establishing new villages in Greater Sekhukhune Region. It became the preferred settlement village for the young and new couples. It has the status of being progressive and advanced as most educated and successful people settled here. Obviously, this has changed today. Every new settlements in Greater Sekhukhune Region are properly planned. Riverside Black Lions FC was started by the entrepreneur, Mr Moropane, who ran a well liked shop at Riverside village. His shop became famous for fresh fat cakes it was selling. He assembled very talented players in this young village. We at Moripane Scientists FC used to underestimate them; thinking that we were the oldest and therefore they would not defeat us. When they defeated us, it was always very painful. When my visiting scholar uncle, Mr Alex “Sugar Ray” Matheba, became friends with his fellow school mates at Riverside Black Lions FC and joined their team, a “war” erupted at Moripane village. We felt betrayed. He stayed at Moripane village but played for Riverside Black Lions FC. The worst was that then Moripane Lekatika Loss My Cherrie FC (later Moripane Scientists FC) was led by my late uncle, Mr Zebra Patjane. My uncle, Mr Alex “Sugar Ray” Matheba, stayed with us at my grandparents’ house at Moripane village. This was the most confusing era for me, and this is when I started understanding this is just a game, not a war. This is something that I could not do when I moved to stay with my other late uncle at Riverside, Mr Nathaniel Phashamakgwale Patjane. I stayed at Riverside village but continued to play for Moripane Scientists FC. Riverside players tried to recruit me, but I could not leave Moripane Scientists FC. Riverside Black Lions FC changed the name to Riverside General Stars FC, named after their new leader, Delux DnD “General” Mabe. Riverside General Stars FC has its own history that must be researched to establish their contribution to village football in Greater Sekhukhune Region. What we know is that the great entrepreneur of Riverside village, Mr Rob Riba, took over responsibilities of the club. He sponsored the club for a long period. He has certainly contributed to its growth as a village football club. The team is still based at his shop, which is until today the most common meeting

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point of the people of Riverside village. We would like to engage with Mr Rob Riba about this club and find out what role, according to him, the club played in Greater Sekhukhune Region.

CHAPTER 30/SCENE 30 - RIVERSIDE NTOTOMENG FC: This is another village football club at Riverside village that did not exist for a long time. But Riverside Ntotomeng FC made a quick great impact on village football in Riverside and at Greater Sekhukhune Region. It was named after a pile of soil as a result of road construction in the area. That is what the name Ntotomeng means. They were seen as spoilers as they introduced competition to Riverside General Stars FC when everybody in Riverside village thought they could have consolidated and built one strong club in the village. The two clubs were separated by the main road to Jane Furse. So, it was easy to build two separate identities between the two village football clubs. I do not remember the two clubs playing regularly against each other.

CHAPTER 31/SCENE 31 - RIVERSIDE YOUNG KILLERS FC: When my cousin, Dan “Ten Ten” Patjane settled down at Riverside village, he joined Riverside General Stars FC as a coach. He later left them to establish a new village football club called Riverside Young Killers FC. This is just a confirmation of appetite for new village football at Riverside village. This is definitely not the last time we saw new village football clubs emerging from Riverside village. We are proud to mention that Riverside Young Killers FC is one of those village football clubs that participates in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region Development Football Exchange Programme. This is not a village club of the 70s and 80s but a product of that movement of village football clubs.

CHAPTER 32/SCENE 32 - MAKALANENG SMODERN FC: This is another of the late entrance in the Greater Sekhukhune Region. The people of Makalaneng are part of the community that was forced removed from Marble Hall region to Greater Sekhukhune Region, and they settled at Makalaneng outside Jane Furse. They were very wealthy with livestock when they arrived. But due to poor grazing fields they lost their livestock. They had a very strong village football club that continued without disruption. They immediately introduced their village football club, Makalaneng Smodern FC, to Greater Sekhukhune Region. They contributed immensely to the competitiveness of village football in the region.

CHAPTER 33/SCENE 33 - VLEISCHBOOM LINTI FAST ELEVEN FC: This village football club is one of the very few clubs that had corporate sponsorship. Almost all their players worked for the biggest bakery in Greater Sekhukhune Region, Linti Bakery in Vleischboom, hence the name Vleischboom Linti Fast Eleven FC. Travelling was not a problem for them, since the bakery had bakkies. This bakery supplied the whole of Greater Sekhukhune Region with bread. So, it was a very famous and most known village football club in the region. They were a marvel to watch when playing. It is a disappointment for the region that this team could not continue in its original form.

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CHAPTER 34/SCENE 34 - MALAKA ELEVEN EXPERIENCE FC: Ga-Malaka is one of the big villages in the mountainous region in the southern part of Jane Furse at the top of Ngwaritsi River. It is neighbouring Thoto and Eensaam villages. These three villages are located in one of the fertile land that used to be farming land by some white farmers. Actually, my grandfather, Mr Nchwape Tsimba, lived and died in this area. We recently visited his grave. He, apparently married seven wives, hence the Tsimba clan is big, diverse, and complex. Malaka Eleven Experience FC is one name of a village football club that always intrigued me. I could not reconcile with the name Malaka Eleven Experience FC. The brand of football they played is what won me over, especially considering that it took us, Moripane Scientists FC, forever before we could defeat them. When our time came and we defeated them, during our football tournament at Moripane village, they could not accept it, and they walked out of the field. That is how bitter the rivalry between Malaka Eleven Experience FC and Moripane Scientists FC was. Surprisingly most of their players and our players played for the same mining football clubs in the Witbank mining region. But when they came home during the Christmas times for the traditional annual soccer tournaments they were the worst enemies.

CHAPTER 35/SCENE 35 - THOTO SHINNING STARS FC: This is another big village football club in the southern part of Jane Furse, at the top of Ngwaritsi River. Thoto is the actual home place of my grandfather, Mr Nchwape Tsimba. I have never experienced a game between Moripane Scientists FC and Thoto Shinning Stars FC. It is however, one of the famous village clubs in the region. I only heard about them from my uncles. But on visiting this village to reconnect with my grandfather's place, I felt in love with the area. It is a beautiful village on the bottom of a beautiful mountain range. Even from the distance, as you travel from Groblersdal to Jane Furse, you cannot help wishing to be driving toward there as either a short-left tourist or just a guest. The people are just so friendly. We are looking forward to learning more about this legendary village football club and their great footballers of yesteryear.

CHAPTER 36/SCENE 36 - NTWANE FC: Unlike Ga-Malaka and Thoto villages, this neighbouring village is extremely small. Yet Ntwane FC is the village football club I have played against a number of times. They had particular talented footballer who could carry the whole team. It was always a great experience to visit Ntwane village and be welcomed by their small village crowd. Ntwane FC will always have a special place in my heart. I had great experience playing against them as a member and player of Moripane Scientists FC.

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CHAPTER 37/SCENE 37 - MOLEPANE BLUE JAGUARS FC: Ga-Molepane is a mountainous village, south-east of Jane Furse. It is a home to my mother's aunt who is married to the Maelane. I have never feared a village football club like Molepane Blue Jaguars FC. I always wished that Moripane Scientists FC never played against Molepane Blue Jaguars FC. They were just too good for us, according to me. When I learned that Molepane Blue Jaguars FC were visiting us at Moripane Scientists FC, and I knew that my cousin, Dan "Ten Ten" Patjane, and I were the only reserve players, I had the worst week of my life. I prayed that none of our players got injured. I was not keen to play against Molepane Blue Jaguars FC. I was just too scared of them. Our top eleven players were very good. Our team was a combination of talent and hard working players. The day arrived, and indeed the team in blue, Molepane Blue Jaguars FC, arrived. As expected my cousin and I were on the reserve bench. At half time the score was 0-0. One of our players had to be replaced. Our team leadership decided to bring my cousin in, instead of me. My heart started beating even faster. To the surprise of everyone, in the first 20 minutes of the second half my cousin made a historical contact with the ball and scored the only goal of the day. It was not a great goal, but it remains a historical milestone. Molepane Blue Jaguars FC had been defeated by Moripane Scientists FC. And I was saved. I never played against Molepane Blue Jaguars FC. I however, played alongside one of their former greatest players, the late Kaizer Komane, at Moripane Scientists FC.

CHAPTER 38/SCENE 38 - DITLOU YOUNG ANGELS FC: The current club that is active at Ga-Molepane village is Ditlou Young Angels FC, under the leadership of Mr Mogoru. It is one of the village football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Region that participated in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region development exchange programme.

CHAPTER 39/SCENE 39 - PHOKWANE THOSOLENG FC: The community of Phokwane is under the chieftaincy of the Maserumules. They are originally Ba-Matlala wa Phokwane. There are three Matlala villages in Limpopo that must always be distinguished from each other, namely Matlala wa Phokwane, Matlala wa Mohwelere in Tsimanyane, and Matlala wa Thaaba in the northwest of Polokwane City. The village football club, Phokwane Thosoleng FC, just like Molepane Blue Jaguars FC, was one of those village clubs we were very scared of. It is also one of the clubs that Moripane Scientists FC played against ones and defeated them never to play them again. I clearly remember the game we played against them in a soaking rain. My brother (son to my aunt), Clive "Babsy" Ramushu, from Manganeng Batau Young Killers FC, at Manganeng village, had visited Moripane village, for a number of weeks. He played for us in those weeks. He was our secret weapon for the game against Phokwane Thosoleng FC. Unlike the game against Molepane Blue Jaguars FC, I was looking forward to play against Phokwane Thosoleng FC. I had matured in my game and then motivated to play against the so called big village football clubs. And, in this case my brother, Clive "Babsy" Ramushu was like Jairzinho arriving for Kaizer Chiefs. We played against Phokwane Thosoleng FC at their home, in Phokwane. Indeed, my brother, Clive, lived up to his reputation. He inflicted damage on Phokwane Thosoleng FC. Moripane Scientists FC

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emerged victorious. We were happy. In those days a win was all what we wanted, nothing more. We played for the pride of our villages and village football clubs.

CHAPTER 40/SCENE 40 - MGABABA RESTEN FC: One of the youngest villages outside Phokwane is called Brooklyn Mgababa. This is the home of the village football club, Mgababa Resten FC. My aunt, Ms Ramokwena Ramphisa, is married into Ramphisas at Brooklyn, Mgababa village. It is also one of the village football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Region that participated in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region development exchange programme. We will need to obtain more data about Mgababa Resten FC during the research work.

CHAPTER 41/SCENE 41 - BAROKA BA NKOANA HOT BEANS FC: Ga-Nkoana is one of the biggest villages in the Greater Sekhukhune Region. The pride of this village in the 70s and 80s was their then village football club, Baroka Ba Nkoana Hot Beans FC, alias “Dinawa Tsa Go Fisha”. They were ruthless at home games. I would always love to listen to the Radio Lebowa announcer during Tsa Dipapadi Programme on Friday evenings, or Dipelo tsa Dipapadi on Monday evenings, when he announces about Baroka Ba Nkoana Hot Beans FC. He would only say Dinawa Tsa Go Fisha, and we will know which team he was talking about.

CHAPTER 42/SCENE 42 - ATOK THE BROOMS FC: This is one of the few corporate owned football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Regions. It belonged to the Atok Mining Company. Of course, it had unfair advantage to other village football clubs in the region due to the financial support it received from the mine. My question is why didn't the mining company take Atok The Brooms FC to the highest level of football in South Africa? This would have done well to Greater Sekhukhune Region and South African football. It is never late, though. The company is still there. We hope that this research project will inspire the mining industry in Greater Sekhukhune Region to invest in local village football development in the region. I recall very well that Penge Mine also had a football club.

CHAPTER 43/SCENE 43 - MAILA CHIEFS FC: Ga-Maila Segolo is a big village outside Schoonoord in Greater Sekhukhune Region. Their flagship village football club is called Maila Chiefs FC. I am not sure if it still exists. I remember one game we, Moripane Scientists FC, played against them at a tournament at Ga-Moretsele village. That game was washed away by rain in the morning and had to be replayed in the afternoon. We lost dismally. I am mindful that there are two Ga-Mailas in Greater Sekhukhune Region, namely Ga-Maila Segolo and Ga-Maila Mapitsane. They both have strong village football clubs with great reputation in the Greater Sekhukhune Region. We will unpack this during the research project.

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CHAPTER 44/SCENE 44 – MARETLWANENG FLYING STARS FC: Maretlwaneng is a small village after Ga-Phaahla, next to Lobethal Missionary, on the riverbanks of Nwgaritsi River. It is also one of the village football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Region that participated in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region development exchange programme. We will need to obtain more data about Maretlwaneng Flying Stars FC during the research work. The relationship between COMETSA and this village football club was facilitated by Mr Isaac Mphela, who is the resident Maretlwaneng village and a member of COMETSA.

CHAPTER 45/SCENE 45 – KGARI OCEAN SWALLOWS FC: Kgari village is one of the villages in the Mashabela area, on the Ngwaritsi River banks. It is also one of the village football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Region that participated in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region development exchange programme. We will need to obtain more data about Kgari Ocean Swallows FC during the research work. COMETSA was introduced to Kgari Ocean Swallows FC by Mr Mike Selepe of Mashabela Diphiri FC.

CHAPTER 46/SCENE 46 – MOLEBELEDI CITY ROCKS FC: Molebeledi village is one of the small villages at Ga-Mashabela. It is actually located in the mountainous part, which could easily be left out of any development programme. We are glad that COMETSA football development exchange programme could reach Molebeledi City Rocks FC. They are therefore recognised as one of the village football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Region that participated in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region development exchange programme. We will need to obtain more data about Molebeledi City Rocks FC during the research work.

CHAPTER 47/SCENE 47 – MASEMOLA JUNIOR BUCS FC: The Masemola village is one of the biggest villages in the Greater Sekhukhune Region, and has a strong history in village football. We are glad to have both Masemola Junior Bucs FC and Apel-Cross Hungry Lions FC as two of the many village footballs in the region that have participated in our development football exchange programme.

It is also one of the village football clubs in Greater Sekhukhune Region that participated in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region development exchange programme. We will need to obtain more data about Mgababa Resten FC during the research work.

CHAPTER 48/SCENE 48 – TSWAING GATAS FC: Another small village in the Apel area, whose village football club, Tswaing Gatas FC has participated in the COMETSA Gauteng and Greater Sekhukhune Region development exchange programme. We will need to obtain more data about Tswaing Gatas FC during the research work.

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NB: If you are a citizen of Greater Sekhukhune Region, i.e. Sekhukhune District Municipality, and you remember other legendary village football clubs, players, administrators, owners, and sponsors, I have not covered in this write-up, please let us know. We want to hear about those legends and acknowledge them. We also welcome input from any other region in the country that has a very rich history of village football clubs. We will add such inputs to this project.

PROJECT FACEBOOK PAGE: visit the Facebook page of the Project directly, like the page and participate in the discussion on this project, <https://www.facebook.com/Cometsa-Research-Project-Village-Football-Clubs-SA-1714091952156685/>

COMPANY FACEBOOK PAGE: Visit the Facebook page of COMETSA Jane Furse Sekhukhune FC (Pty) Ltd, like the page and participate in the discussion on this project and other projects of our company. Click this link to access the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Cometsa-Jane-Furse-Sekhukhune-FC-Pty-Ltd-1687742398138949/> or

RESEARCH PROJECT FOLLOW UP: We would like to continue with this project of capturing great village football memories of Greater Sekhukhune Region, and hopefully inspire these villages to resuscitate their football heritage, and grow football in the region. It is sad that we have not been able to produce professional footballers from this region. This will have to change, and we hope to contribute to this change. Contact the following officials of COMETSA Jane Furse Sekhukhune FC (Pty) Ltd, who are based at Jane Furse:

- Mr Dominic Kgobise “Touch” Patjane; Cell 076 784 6362 or 076 665 2713
- Mr Mike Mabushe Tsimba; Cell 076 190 4754 or 082 504 4556
- Mr Simon Manamelane Mphela; Cell 078 751 9299

You are also welcome to write to me directly at:

Mr Sam Tsimba, President & Chairman, COMETSA GoC International (Pty) Ltd,

P.O. Box 1126 Isando 1600;

callcentre@Cometsa-GoC.com ; sam.tsimba@Cometsa-GoC.com or visit www.Cometsa-GoC.com