

Build, manage your own stadiums

• NSA boss to GFA, premier clubs

Story: Beatrice Laryea

THE Director General of the National Sports Authority (NSA), Professor Peter Twumasi, has challenged the Ghana Football Association (GFA) and premier league clubs to construct and manage their own stadiums — dedicated venues for football activities — in order to reduce the reliance on state-owned facilities

that cater to a multitude of sports and at the grassroots level.

In advocating an independent stadium ownership, the NSA boss proposed that funds, such as those generated from Ghana's participation in the FIFA World Cup, be allocated to building football-specific stadiums. He highlighted the multifunctional nature of NSA facilities, catering not

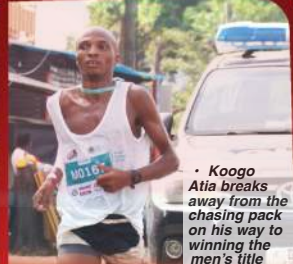
• Continued on Back page



• Professor Peter Twumasi — NSA boss



• Portia Anaba striding to victory towards the finish line at Dansoman.
Pictures: ELVIS NII NOI DOWUONA



• Koogo Atia breaks away from the chasing pack on his way to winning the men's title

Atia, Portia reign supreme

• Win FNB Accra Marathon

Page 06

Hughton faces World Cup litmus test



• Coach Chris Hughton — Black Stars

Back page

Voice of

Graphic SPORTS

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13 — 19, 2023

Safeguarding players lives: Imperative of mandatory medical tests

THE recent tragic demise of Black Stars forward Raphael Dwamena has once again brought to the forefront the urgent need for the Ghana football authorities to prioritise player health and safety.

Dwamena, who collapsed on the field during an Albanian first-tier national football super league game at the weekend, succumbed to a heart attack at the age of 28. This unfortunate incident sheds light on the imperative of implementing regular medical tests for all teams in Ghana to mitigate potential risk factors.

Dwamena's history of heart-related issues, dating back to 2019, underscores the gravity of the matter. Despite receiving medical advice to retire from football after a series of

heart attacks in October 2019, the player continued to pursue his passion. Subsequent health concerns in January 2020, while playing for the Spanish side Levante, culminated in surgery. The tragedy of his passing on the pitch highlights the inherent risks that players face and the crucial role that preventive measures can play in averting such unfortunate events. Other football leagues around the world have recognised the importance of proactive health measures and emergency assistance at match venues. Implementing regular medical tests for players has become a standard practice in many leagues, serving as a preemptive measure to identify potential health issues before they escalate. The Ghana Football Association (GFA) must take a cue from these initiatives and prioritise the well-being of its athletes.

Moreover, enhancing emergency assistance protocols at match venues is equally paramount. Rapid response teams, equipped with necessary medical facilities, can make a significant difference in critical moments. Learning from best practices globally, the Ghanaian football authorities should invest in comprehensive emergency medical training for on-site personnel to ensure swift and effective responses to health crises.

In the wake of Dwamena's tragic passing, it is commendable that the President of the GFA, Kurt Simeon-Okraku, acknowledged the player's contributions and expressed condolences to the bereaved family. However, these sentiments must be translated into concrete actions to prevent similar incidents in the future. The football community in Ghana must rally together to honour Dwamena's memory by taking decisive steps to prioritize the health and safety of its players.

As the nation mourns the loss of a talented athlete, we call upon the Ghana football authorities to institute mandatory medical tests for all teams and bolster emergency assistance protocols at match venues. The Graphic Sports believes that by doing so, we can honour Dwamena's legacy and ensure that the beautiful game remains a source of joy without compromising the well-being of those who grace the pitch. Let this tragedy serve as a catalyst for positive change, propelling Ghanaian football towards a future where players' health is safeguarded, and preventable tragedies become a thing of the past.

Unforgettable hero of Kluivert

IN his prime, Patrick Kluivert was one of the best strikers in the world, scoring many goals at club and international level. The Dutchman is still remembered by many and has an interesting history.

Kluivert was born on 1 July 1976 in the Dutch capital Amsterdam.

He soon ended up in the Ajax youth academy, where he became a member of the first team.

Kluivert made his debut in August 1994 in the Dutch Super Cup against Ajax rivals Feyenoord. He was only 18 at the time, but scored his first goal in a 3-0 win.

That same season, Kluivert would go on to win his first Dutch league title with Ajax, scoring 18 goals in the Eredivisie.

This would be the run-up to perhaps the most important goal of his career, when he scored the decider in the 1994/95 Champions League final against AC Milan.

The following season, Kluivert won several trophies with Ajax, but missed out on the biggest prize of all when he lost the Champions League final to Juventus after a penalty shoot-out (2-4).

Kluivert's performances in Amsterdam did not go unnoticed, and AC Milan signed the striker on a free transfer in 1997.

His stay in Italy, however, was short-lived, as a year later he was on his way to Barcelona to play again under Louis van Gaal.

In his first season in the Catalan capital, Kluivert helped Barça to the Spanish title with 15 goals and 14 assists in the league (Transfermarkt).

It would be the only trophy with Barça for Kluivert, who nevertheless built an impressive goalscoring record at the Camp Nou. In 257 games for Barcelona, he scored 122 goals (Transfermarkt).

His Barcelona adventure ended in 2004 with a move to Newcastle United. Kluivert netted 13 goals for the Magpies that season, but was released after the season.

In July 2005, it was Valencia CF who gave Kluivert the opportunity to relaunch his career in his beloved Spain, where he had already proven himself to be a fearsome striker.

Injuries prevented Kluivert from having the desired impact at Mestalla, however, and he left after just one season. Next stop: PSV Eindhoven.

He also failed to make a mark in the Netherlands, so he ventured south to LOSC Lille in France, where he scored four goals.

After one season with Les Dogues, Kluivert ended his 14-year

career.

Club football has said goodbye to a striker who was once his country's leading striker and scored many goals for the Netherlands.

Kluivert netted 40 goals in 79 appearances for the Dutch (Transfermarkt).

The 1998 FIFA World Cup brought Kluivert a mixture of emotions. In the group phase, he was sent off against Belgium for elbowing his opponent Lorenzo Staelens.

He then scored against Argentina in the quarter-finals and Brazil in the semi-finals, but could not prevent the Netherlands' elimination at the hands of the Canarinhos.

Two years later, at UEFA Euro 2000, he missed a penalty in normal time against Italy in the semi-finals, after which the Dutch were eliminated on spot kicks.

After his retirement, Kluivert embarked on a second career on the bench and worked for several clubs and countries.

In 2012, for example, he was appointed assistant manager of the Dutch national team. After that, he also served as head coach of Curaçao.

In 2016, he was hired as PSG's sporting director, a position he left



• Patrick Kluivert

just a year later.

In 2023, Kluivert was named coach of Turkish club Adana Demirspor, where he signed a contract until the summer of 2025.

Kluivert's early career was marked by a fatal accident in Amsterdam, when he got involved in a car accident at high speed at the age of 19 and a 56-year-old man was killed.

Kluivert was handed 240 hours

of community service and was banned from driving for 1.5 years.

Today, Kluivert supports his children in fulfilling their dreams. He has four sons, three of whom, Justin, Ruben and Shane, are professional footballers.

So Kluivert's legacy lives on, but his sons will have to do their best to become Dutch legends of the same stature as their father.