



**Takyi makes U-turn on Olympic dream**

— Page 4



**2023/24 Premier League Hearts' revival faces first test**

— Back page

• Martin Koopman — Hearts coach

## GFA presidential election rumpus

# Afriyie to fight case at CAS

• George Afriyie — Vows to fight his disqualification

Story: Peter Sarbah

**A**BDUL Salam Yakubu, the President of Division One side, New Edubiase United, has hinted that George Afriyie, a presidential aspirant for the Ghana Football Association (GFA), may pursue legal action at the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) if his appeal against disqualification from the upcoming elections is not resolved favourably.

Mr Afriyie, a former vice-president of the

GFA, has set his sights on unseating the current head of the football governing body, Kurt Simeon-Okraaku. However, his candidacy was abruptly halted when he was disqualified from the election originally scheduled for September 27 in Tamale.

The Elections Committee disqualified him last week, citing a breach of Article 13(2)(f) of the GFA statutes and a failure to secure the

• Continued on Back page

## Voice of Graphic SPORTS

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 — 17, 2023

### Samuel Takyi needs humility, focus and discipline in boxing journey

**I**n the world of sports, few stories captivate us like that of a young, promising athlete setting their sights on Olympic glory. Ghana's boxing sensation, Samuel Takyi, was one such hopeful after securing a bronze medal at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. However, recent developments have cast a shadow on his Olympic aspirations as he declares his disinterest in pursuing another Olympic dream and shift his focus towards his burgeoning professional boxing career. While this transition is entirely within his rights as an athlete, there are valuable lessons to be learned from the guidance of former world champion Joshua Clottey, who has emphasised the importance of discipline and humility in the world of boxing.

Takyi's frustration at not securing a spot on the national amateur boxing team for the ongoing African Olympic qualifiers in Senegal is understandable. However, it is the young boxer to remember that early success in the world of professional boxing does not automatically translate into Olympic glory. His earlier aspirations of securing Ghana's first-ever Olympic gold medal in Paris were admirable, but it is also crucial to stay grounded in the present and make informed decisions for his career.

The President of the Ghana Boxing Federation, Bernard Quartey, has offered Takyi a lifeline to continue pursuing his Olympic dream. Two alternative qualification pathways will be available next year for members of the Black Bombers who miss out on Olympic slots during the current qualifiers in Dakar, Senegal. Takyi should seriously consider this opportunity, as representing one's country at the Olympics is a significant honor and a dream shared by many athletes.

Takyi's decision to distance himself from the amateur boxing scene due to training and selection issues should be reviewed carefully. Discipline and commitment are vital traits for any athlete, whether in the amateur or professional ranks. Dismissing the world of amateur boxing altogether may not be in his best interest, as it can provide valuable experience and opportunities for growth.

The 22-year-old boxer's assertion that he is now a professional and cannot concern himself with amateur matters is understandable to some extent. However, it is essential for Takyi to remain open to diverse

experiences and possibilities within the boxing world. Learning from different aspects of the sport can only enhance his skills and overall boxing knowledge.

Takyi's dismissal of allegations regarding a financial dispute with the Ministry of Youth and Sports is a positive step. His primary focus should be on his training and performance in the ring, rather than getting embroiled in off-the-ring controversies. Clottey's cautionary message to Takyi is timely and relevant. He rightly points out that Takyi's perception of himself as a successful boxer solely based on his Olympic medal is misguided. The path to becoming a world champion is long and arduous, requiring dedication, humility, and the ability to learn from those with more experience. Takyi's journey in professional boxing began with promise. However, his recent disagreements with management have stalled his progress. It is essential for the youngster to recognise that he is still in the early stages of his career and can benefit immensely from the guidance of seasoned professionals like the 'Bazooka' Quartey. The Graphic Sports maintains that Takyi's decision to focus on his professional boxing career is respectable, but he should do so with discipline and humility. The guidance of experienced mentors and the opportunity to represent Ghana at future Olympics should not be dismissed lightly. His journey has the potential for greatness, but it requires a realistic perspective and a commitment to continuous improvement.

## Messi's act in the home of Hollywood

**A**LL the focus has been on Lionel Messi since his move to Inter Miami, but his most recent showing has left us feeling all warm and fuzzy inside, thanks to a big helping of Barcelona-themed nostalgia.

Since arriving in the United States and whipping a winning free-kick top bins on his Inter Miami debut, it's been nothing but magic from the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner who is clearly looking to expand his brand of immortality into new territory.

Messi has pretty much single-handedly turned around the fortunes of the franchise who were completely lost before his arrival, turning up and inspiring them to the 2023 Leagues Cup with an array of throwback performances.

The type of performances that would've had people fooled into thinking Phil Neville was destined for managerial greatness, if he were still in the job.

But today isn't about our Fizzer. It's not even about Messi, really. Inter Miami doubled their lead away to current MLS Cup holders



• Lionel Messi

Los Angeles FC with a goal that felt like it was made in Barcelona. A goal that gives us *deja vu* but for all the right reasons.

After heading to Miami, Messi was eventually joined by former Barcelona colleagues Sergio Busquets and Jordi Alba. Since then,

the three have seemingly been doing their best in trying to convince everyone that they're colourblind, and are confusing the pink of Inter Miami with the blue and red of Barcelona.

Seriously, their influence has been monstrous.

Just months ago they

looked out of ideas and the fingers were being pointed at David Beckham, but the sudden acquisition of a spine that struck fear into every side in Europe for the best part of a decade now has the team ping-pong it around as if they're prime Barca themselves, wherever

they go.

It felt like a case of when and not if the trio would combine for a school reunion-type goal in Miami. We finally got that against LAFC, and it did not disappoint. They've rocked our world again.

Like a hot knife through

butter. It's just impossible to get bored of, isn't it? A goal sculpted for Hollywood. Fitting, considering it was in LAFC's backyard.

The three of them are on a completely different wavelength to the rest of the world, let alone the other footballers on the pitch.

Busquets fires a brilliant pass into Messi on the turn through the middle, allowing the Argentine to work his magic and thread through an eye of the needle ball to the overlapping Alba, leaving two defenders clueless as to how they'd been split so seamlessly.

Once the pass found Alba's feet, it was game over. Inevitable. LAFC had felt the wrath that just about every top side in Europe and every La Liga club had to endure, season upon season.

On one hand, it was rather triggering watching the trio kick into gear like that again. It's like a bad dream. But when you let go of that fear, it just feels so endlessly special to watch them in full stride, dancing their way from back to front in a matter of seconds.

—MSN.com