



Penalty marathon decides Milo Championship

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The provincial football finals of the Nestle/Milo championship were played on Saturday the 21st of May at Shatale Stadium. Four primary school teams, each of them having won the regional knock-outs in their respective area of Mpumalanga, competed in the tournament.

Bushbuckridge was represented by Kwetse Primary School from Marite, with their opposition being Zikhuphule Primary (Middelburg), Mbazima Primary (Komatipoort) and Carolina Combined.

A mouthwatering R10000 awaited the winner of the competition, with the prize money bound to an initiative in line with the sponsor's values of nutrition, health and wellness.

Moreover, the Provincial champion will be representing Mpumalanga at the national Nestle/Milo championship held in Johannesburg where R100000 is up for grabs and the prospect of attending a coaching clinic hosted by former Bafana Bafana legend Mark Fish.

This was motivation enough for the teams to display their best football.

The semifinals saw Kwetse playing against Carolina Combined. After an even contest during regular time in which both teams managed to score once, the first penalty shoot-out of the day needed to decide the winner and the first finalist. In the do-or-die, the boys from Marite showed stronger nerves and beat their counterparts from Carolina by 5-4.

The second semifinal saw Mbazima challenge the XI from Zikhuphule, and after a goalless draw in regular time also this match was decided at the penalty spot. Mbazima finally won 4-3.

The final between Kwetse Primary and Mbazima Primary repeated the slogan of the day and also went to penalties since both teams

couldn't find the back of the net during playing time.

Unfortunately for the local boys from Marite, they couldn't repeat their success from the eleven metre mark, and Mbazima won the shoot-out with 5 goals to 4. The visitors from Komatipoort celebrated their triumph by chanting and dancing, and lifting their goalkeeper high up into the air, while the runners-up could at least be proud knowing they are the second best primary school team in Mpumalanga.

During the award ceremony after the tournament medals were handed over to the players and officials of the two finalists by the authorities of the provincial and regional football fraternity and representatives of the sponsor. The jubilation reached its climax when the winner's cheque was given to Mbazima's captain.

Coach Bolkie Ngomane was obviously happy and proud of his boys from Komatipoort. "The players showed discipline which was the key to success." But he also admitted that winning two matches in the penalty shoot-out was a great deal of luck. "Our goalkeeper saved us!" Now he hopes that the team will travel to Johannesburg well prepared so that it is able to compete for the national championship.

Also Mr. Siphon Mabuza, chairperson of SASFA Mpumalanga (South African Schools Football Association), and Mr. Allen Brown, chairperson of Local Football Association Bushbuckridge were pleased with the organisation of the tournament and the standard of football demonstrated by the four finalists.

Brown was particularly happy that an event of such magnitude was staged in Bushbuckridge. He also emphasised how important this kind of exposure for the players is and that these competitions are a great platform to showcase their talent.



Above: 2011 Nestle Milo Champions - Mbazima Primary

**2011 Nestle Milo Runners-up ...
KWETSE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

