



**NEW**  
**BIG EAT**  
TINY PRICE™ MENU  
Limited Time Only

STARTING AT  
**\$5**  
ORDER NOW >



**SUBSCRIBE NOW**

**Exclusive**

» Comments (41) | [Print Story](#) | [Send to Friend](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [SHARE](#) 

## African Talking Point: 2010 WC & CAN Qualifiers In Perspective

Goal.com's former Africa Editor, **Ibrahim Dabo**, takes an in-depth look into the ongoing 2010 African World Cup and Nations Cup qualifiers, including an [exclusive interview with Nigerian ace Nwankwo Kanu and other African stars](#). **Ibrahim welcomes your valuable and informative comments on what you think about the tournament so far.**

28 Jun 2008 14:31:08

The start of 2008 was undoubtedly marked by waves of excitement on the African continent as the 26<sup>th</sup> Edition of the African Nations Cup took its course. The tournament was successfully hosted in the West African state of Ghana from January 20 to February 10, and North Africa's impact on African football did not go unnoticed. The Pharaoh's of Egypt, who won the tournament as hosts two years ago, emerged winners again, and thus fortified their position with an unparalleled record of six continental championships.

While those beautiful memories of Africa's most prestigious tournament still linger on our minds, we now focus on another level of excitement. Much enthusiasm is geared towards the ongoing 2010 African World Cup and African Nations Cup qualifiers, which is already raising eyebrows. The beauty of African football never fades, and surprises are always inevitable.

The qualifiers kicked off in June. **South Africa** will host the 2010 World Cup, while **Angola** hosts the 2010 African Nations Cup. Both teams currently participate in the qualifying series because Bafana Bafana and the Palancas Negras vie for a place in the Nations Cup and World Cup, respectively. So far it has been a challenging run. With four qualifiers already been played, South African fans, especially, might be suffering from sleepless nights, as their beloved team fails to impress yet again.

There are twelve groups in this qualifying stage, and the winners of each group, along with the eight best runners-up will qualify for the second round of group stage. Split into five round-robin, home-and-away groups of four teams, only the winners of each group will then qualify for the 2010 World Cup, while the top three from each group will qualify for the Nations Cup. Africa will for the first time be represented by six countries in the World Cup because South Africa have already qualified as hosts.

Moving on to the qualifiers and standings so far, Africa's traditional powerhouses have achieved some rewarding result, but there have also been some shockers, as lightweights sometimes go mercilessly by inflicting unbearable pain on their superiors. And that is exactly how we like to see it: tournaments must be competitive always for those breathtaking and electrifying moments to trigger. The next sets of qualifiers will be played in September and October, and it is with great anticipation that we look forward to more surprises.

In **Group 1, Cameroon** and **Cape Verde Islands** currently battle for a place at the top of the group. Only a point sets both teams apart, as the latter trails the group's favourite who have secured ten points. The results of the Indomitable Lions have not been the best as expected after they were held to a scoreless draw away to Tanzania. However, they recuperated and secured a 2-1 win in the return leg. A stiff challenge is now projected when they play away to Cape Verde in September, as **Tanzania** and **Mauritius** have no realistic chance of progressing beyond this group stage.

**Guinea** and **Kenya** share seven points each in **Group 2**, while **Zimbabwe** and **Namibia** have five and three points, respectively. Guinea have made nine Nations Cup appearances and reached the quarter-finals of the last three finals. They have what it takes to emerge eventual winners of this group, and their fans have entrusted them with much hope to live up to the occasion.

**Uganda** shocked 2006 World Cup finalists **Angola** with a 3-1 defeat at home in a **Group 3** qualifier in June. To make matters worse, the Palancas Negras could only but secure a goalless draw with their opponents during the return leg. Meanwhile, **Benin** took advantage of the mishap on the part of the Angolans by fortifying their position at the top of the group. Three wins over Uganda and **Niger** (home and away) have earned them pole position in the group with nine points, and Angola trail them by two

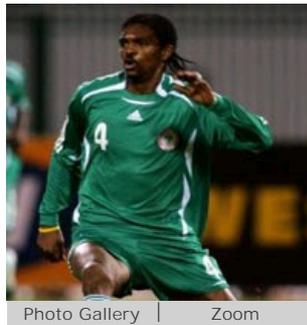


Photo Gallery | Zoom

Kanu - Nigeria

**Related Links**

- Teams**  
Cameroon  
Guinea  
Nigeria  
Tunisia

**Most Read**

- Goal.com Top 50 Players Of 2008-09
- Cristiano Ronaldo's Presentation Round-Up - Number 9, Sir Alex, And More
- AC Milan To Offer £20m Plus Mathieu Flamini For Emmanuel Adebayor - Report
- Manchester United Linked With Barcelona Striker Samuel Eto'o - Report
- OFFICIAL: Milan Sign Oguchi Onyewu

More Articles

**GOAL.com shop**

Fan Shop Gear Tickets Watch Magazine



**Adidas Soccer Cleats**  
Check out the latest lines including the HOT **F50.9 TUNIT!**

[MORE DETAILS!](#)

Powered by **PriceGrabber.com** 

Advertisement

MARIO 000000  0:00 WORLD TIME 1-1 400



**PLAY NOW**

playsushi.com

**Most Discussed**

- EXCLUSIVE: Real Madrid Won't Offer Milan & Manchester United Discounts For Huntelaar **99**
- Didier Drogba Exclusive: Ancelotti's Chelsea Can Challenge For The Champions League **59**
- EXCLUSIVE: Alexi Lalas: 'A Brilliant Move' By Milan And Onyewu **43**
- Nabil El Zhar Exclusive: Liverpool Need To Beat The Small Teams To Win The Premier League **22**
- EXCLUSIVE: Clubs In Italy, Spain & France Want Corinthians Defender Andre Santos - Agent **8**

points.

**Nigeria** are the only team to have qualified so far for the next round after securing maximum points thus far in **Group 4**. The Super Eagles' victories over **South Africa**, **Sierra Leone** and **Equatorial Guinea** (home and away) have left 2010 World Cup hosts, South Africa, and Sierra Leone battling for the second spot in the group, as both teams currently share four points each.

Nigeria's national team captain, **Nwankwo Kanu**, shared with **Goal.com**, in an exclusive interview, some of the reasons behind his team's recent success. And what message does the Super Eagles' success in this qualifying campaign so far send to other Africans?

"The message sent is simple," said Kanu, who plays for English Premier League club Portsmouth.

"We [the Super Eagles] have signaled a return to form. The Nigerian team is back on track, so other African teams had better watch out. The Nigerian teams are together again and the team spirit is high and one. There is 100% fitness level and we are playing 90 minutes with energy to play more games. The Nigerian team of the past is back, we are very strong together."

Nigeria surprisingly failed to qualify for the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany, but Kanu is very much confident that such mishap won't occur this time around.

"I am very confident we shall do well," said Kanu. "We played four games and won all four games. The first week was difficult but after the adjustment all conditions were favourable. We have proved we are ready to qualify for South Africa 2010!"

Meanwhile, Sierra Leone on the other hand last played in the Nations Cup finals in 1996, but striker **Kei Kamara**, who plays in the US' Major League Soccer, believes his country has a chance of progressing beyond this stage. "The Squad we had during these few games was said to be the best team Sierra Leone has produced in a while," the San Jose Earthquakes player told **Goal.com**.

"I have to say our chances to qualify for the next phase are not dead; we are tied for second in the group, even though South Africa have already qualified for the World Cup. Our hopes are alive for the African Nations cup in 2010 and hopefully we can make history for the country and the people of Sierra Leone."

Kei, who made his international debut in June, said he is happy to represent his country, but is determined to help Leone Stars secure a win against Equatorial Guinea in Freetown in September following their loss during the first leg.

"I have to say that game was a hard loss. My first cap for the national team didn't get a good result. I realized how hard it is to play away in Africa. The fans are crazy about their teams, and when the Guineans took the lead, they were just killing the time either by faking an injury or fans running on to the field," he said.

"All these things slow the flow of the game. Come September when Equatorial Guinea comes to Sierra Leone, it is going to be a different story. We know what we have to do is WIN, and show them that we are the better side, as they just got lucky that game. I believe that if we play them ten times on a neutral ground, we will beat them ten times," concluded the 23-year-old.

Should South Africa fail to win against Nigeria in September, the result will come as a big blow to South Africans who hope to see their team in the next Nations Cup, while Sierra Leone's chances of reaching their first finals in more than a decade will be revived.

In **Group 5**, **Ghana** and **Libya** share nine points each at the top of the group. A disappointing 2-0 loss away to **Gabon** hampered the Black Stars' chances of securing a 100 per cent record in this group while **Libya** have emerged with some appetizing results.

Ghana's next match in September will be away to Libya, and the latter will no doubt mount pressure on their opponents in order to secure the valuable three points.

**Gambia's** hopes of reaching their first ever Nations Cup finals have been hindered after the Scorpions lost 1-0 away to **Algeria** in a **Group 6** encounter a week ago. They had already secured a goalless draw at home to their fiercest rivals, **Senegal**, who currently lead the group with eight points. Algeria has six points, followed by Gambia with five points.

Senegal's reserve goalkeeper, **Bouna Coundoul**, who plays in the US's Major League Soccer, believes his team has all it takes to progress to the second round group stage.

"Definitely we have a chance of making it [to the World Cup] for the second time in Senegal's history," the Colorado Rapids goalkeeper told **Goal.com** in an exclusive interview. "I think so because right now we have played four games and it is really good because we have two wins and two ties, especially playing away where the conditions and refereeing are not that great."

"We have got a really good chance to make it to the World Cup 2010 in South Africa. We need to just focus and try to win the other games and go through [to the next stage]. Right now we have better chance than some other teams in our group because Algeria is two points behind us. We are going there [to Algeria in September] and try to get a tie, and when Gambia comes home, we will try to get a win."

Senegal and Gambia form one of the most deadly rivalry on the continent and Coundoul says his side will take no chances against the Scorpions.

"Nowadays in soccer there is no such thing as a small team," said Coundoul. "But I think if the officiating was lot better than that which we had [against Gambia in the first leg], the game would not have ended a nil-nil draw.

"Any point you can get on the road can always become handy when you really need it. Gambia are a good team because they have been playing together for a long time so they know each other quite well.

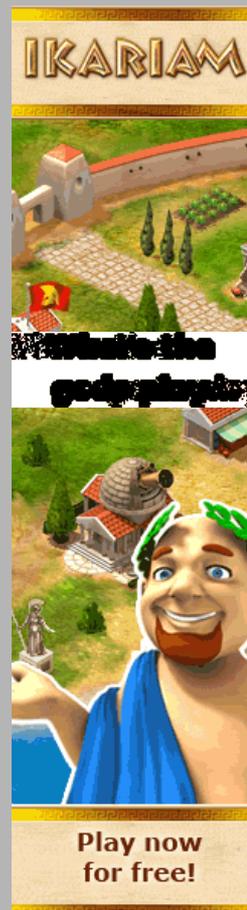
NEWS

19/06/2009 African Stars Win Namibian League For The First Time In 15 Years

TEAMS

-  Cameroon (CMR)
-  Guinea (GIN)
-  Nigeria (NGA)
-  Tunisia (TUN)

Advertisement



IKARIAM

Play now for free!

"We really wanted to get a win because we really know football, and Liberian citizens all around the world, know that this is a new team, and this is a new coach," said Dulee, who plays for Swedish club AIK.

Gambia will go all out to secure a win against low-placed **Liberia** in September in order to revive their chances of progressing to the second rounds before they play away to the Teranga Lions in October.

However, Liberia international striker **Dulee Johnson** told **Goal.com** in an exclusive interview, some of the contributing factors for the poor showing of his team.

"It's actually very hard to say because people who really know football, and Liberian citizens all around the world, know that this is a new team, and this is a new coach," said Dulee, who plays for Swedish club AIK.

"We definitely were going to take the time needed for the team to get together and then try to qualify for the Nations Cup. Although that is not what I hoped for, but for us playing in Europe, we were aware that something like that was on the way because we all are new together. This is a very young team compared to other African countries, so I think time should be given to the team; of course we are disappointed but that's part of football and that is reality."

Liberia's German coach Antoine Hey has given some hints over doubts that he will continue his position coach after the team's ousting but Dulee believes better planning will be instrumental.

"Actually he is a very good coach and he tried to do his best in all capacities for the team to qualify, but I guess he knows that this is a tough group with Senegal and Algeria, and of course, Gambia also are not a bad team. For him to consider quitting would not be a good idea, and not so good for the country."

What does the future hold for Liberian football then? The 24-year-old added: "I guess a lot of Liberian players are thinking of facing another challenge to play in a bigger league, and I think that will help the national team and Liberian football compared to the likes of Ghana, or Nigeria, who have many players playing in the English Premiership. This will be a big step forward in raising the standard of Liberian football at the moment."

**Ivory Coast** with eight points top **Group 7**, and are trailed by second placed **Botswana** by three points. The 2006 World Cup finalists could only manage draws against lowly ranked **Madagascar** and **Botswana**, although they hammered the latter 4-0 in the return leg. The Elephants are favorites to win this group. **Mozambique**, the group's other team, currently have four points and are placed third.

The Atlas Lions of **Morocco** and **Rwanda** fight for supremacy in **Group 8**; both teams share nine points apiece. Rwanda have emerged with impressive results and were able to scare group favorites Morocco with a 3-1 win at home, but a week later the North Africans overturned the deficit with a 2-0 victory in the second leg. **Ethiopia** and **Mauritania** have little chances of making an impact in this group, and their opponents will continue the battle for who should maintain pole position in the group.

**Burkina Faso** played away to **Tunisia** and shocked the 2004 African Champions with a 2-1 win to declare their intentions in **Group 9**. The result was followed by three subsequent wins that put the West Africans at the top of the group with twelve maximum points so far. They have proved also to score most goals in the group as they boast of eleven in their favour. The Carthage Eagles trail Burkina Faso by three points, while **Burundi** and **Seychelles** plunge at the bottom of the group, respectively, with no chances of making a second round group appearance.

**Sudan's** opening **Group 10** encounter with Chad was postponed due to political tensions. **Mali** currently top the group with nine points followed by their closest challengers **Congo** with six points. Both **Chad** and Sudan share three points apiece. Despite their shortcomings in the group, Sudan beat Mali 3-2 at home in mid-June to earn three points.

**Swaziland** and **Zambia** share four points apiece in **Group 11**. The former shocked 2006 World Cup finalists **Togo** with a 2-1 at home during the first set of qualifying games in early June. Togo's Hawks are now a point adrift of the leaders in the three-team group. **Eritrea** withdrew.

In **Group 12**, **DR Congo** and reigning African champions **Egypt** share nine points apiece. The Pharaoh's faced a surprise 1-0 loss away to **Malawi**, but the latter as well suffered a loss as they went down 2-0 during the return leg. Malawi have earned six points while **Djibouti** are yet to acquire any points.

**Questions:** *What do you think is the future of the teams currently participating in this qualifying race? Which teams have impressed you most and which teams have not? Is it too early to judge how South Africa will represent the continent during the 2010 World Cup? Which other five African teams do you see qualifying for the World Cup? Use the form box below to input your comments and many other concerns regarding this competition.*

**Ibrahim Dabo**

<http://www.idabo.20m.com>

[ibrahimdabo@gmail.com](mailto:ibrahimdabo@gmail.com)

Advertisement

**GOAL MAGAZINE**  
COM

SUBSCRIBE  
NOW

**African Restaurant**

Search Our Restaurant Listings For  
[Dining.YellowPages.com/African](http://Dining.YellowPages.com/African)

**Want A Job At The UN?**

Gain Volunteer Experience in Africa

[Volunteer.org.nz/UNJob](http://Volunteer.org.nz/UNJob)

**Call Nigeria \$0.13 no fee**

Nationwide local access Flat rate

[www.3longdistance.com](http://www.3longdistance.com)

Ads by Google

**Your Say (41)**

Name:

Location:

**Post comment**

Sort by: <b>Newest First</b>	Showing: 1-5	1 2 3 4 5 ... 9	<a href="#">See All</a>
	<b>Chigbu Friday Snr.</b> Lagos Nigeria 21:20 10 Oct 2008	I am optimistic that Nigeria will be at the 2010 world cup in south Africa considering their performance so far but any complacency will drop the team from making. I wish them good luck. God bless Nigeria.	
	 0  0		
	<b>Chigbu Friday Snr.</b> Lagos Nigeria 21:20 10 Oct 2008	I am optimistic that Nigeria will be at the 2010 world cup in south Africa considering their performance so far but any complacency will drop the team from making. I wish them good luck. God bless Nigeria.	
	 0  0		
	<b>L.j. Muh'd (Iikpata)</b> Nigeria 15:02 7 Aug 2008	Wel i know Nigeria is goin 2 perform wounder dis tim cos i can c d spice of seriousness on dem. Bt my fear is d bad officers we always h've. D referees are corrupt, dey alway discriminate. And i wonder, FIFA is not doin anytin 2 d issue of bad referees. It is very bad. Most especially wen dey c dat blacks are winin, dat is wen dey wil start blowin again Africans. I'm appealin 2 FIFA to do somtin 2 improve d area of officiating.	
	 0  0		
	<b>Erinosa Paul Kehinde</b> Abeokuta,Ogun-State,Nigeri` 01:01 22 Jul 2008	Nigeria is the most improved team in d continent with the set of young boys assembled together after the last Nations cup. However, i see more shocking defe'at in the next round of the qualifier. Thanks for the services being provi	
	 0  0		
	<b>Kingsley Etim</b> Lagos, Nigeria 18:33 19 Jul 2008	Fifa Shouldn,t think of taking The World Cup out of Africa. it will only show a picture of Discrimination	
	 0  0		
Sort by: <b>Newest First</b>	Showing: 1-5	1 2 3 4 5 ... 9	<a href="#">See All</a>

**Exclusive**

- EXCLUSIVE: Alexi Lolas: 'A Brilliant Move' By Milan And Onyewu
- Didier Drogba Exclusive: Ancelotti's Chelsea Can Challenge For The Champions League
- EXCLUSIVE: Real Madrid Won't Offer Milan &
- Nabil El Zhar Exclusive: Liverpool Need To Beat The Small Teams To Win The Premier League
- EXCLUSIVE: Lazio's Goran Pandev Wouldn't Mind Moving To La Liga - Agent
- EXCLUSIVE: Marko Arnautovic To Inter Deal Is

Manchester United Discounts For Huntelaar

Off - Agent

- Simon Kalika: Eight Places Up For Grabs On Nigeria's World Youth Championship Squad
- EXCLUSIVE: Clubs In Italy, Spain & France Want Corinthians Defender Andre Santos - Agent

[More News](#)



- News
- Editorials
- Clubs
- Europe
- Asia
- Africa
- Americas
- World Cup 2010
- Peace Cup
- Pre-Season
- Transfer Zone
- Goal.com LIVE!

**More**

- Forums
- Goal.com Toolbar
- Mobile
- Live Scores
- Advertise
- Goal.com Magazine

**Popular Searches**

- arsenal
- barcelona
- liverpool
- cristiano ronaldo
- benzema
- manchester united
- kerlon
- eto'o
- juventus
- edin dzeko
- chelsea
- real madrid
- ronaldinho
- david villa
- ronaldo

Google™ Custom Search

Search

[International](#) | 
 [English - America](#) | 
 [English - India](#) | 
 [Italiano](#) | 
 [Deutsch](#) | 
 [Español - España](#) | 
 [Español - Estados Unidos](#) | 
 [Español - Latinoamérica](#) | 
 [Français](#) | 
 [Português](#) | 
 [Nederlands](#)  
[Türkçe](#) | 
 [Indonesian](#) | 
 [한국어](#) | 
 [Ελληνικά](#) | 
 [русский](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#)

Copyright © 2009 Goal.com All rights reserved. The information contained in Goal.com may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed without the prior written authority of Goal.com