

## Inter-race soccer and the 1960 riots in Durban, South Africa

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### Introduction

Sport has historically been segregated in South Africa because prior to 1994 its rulers, believing in a natural supremacy of whites, prohibited non-racial sports.<sup>1</sup> South Africa's citizens had differential access to resources and for most of the country's history only white South Africans could represent the national team. The "beautiful game", as soccer is known by most aficionados, is no exception. Black South Africans experienced decades of disadvantage. One difference from sports like rugby and cricket is that (white) South Africa was banned from international soccer for a much longer period mainly because of the large number of Third World, including African, countries involved in the game.<sup>2</sup>

On 30 September 1951 an important milestone was reached in the annals of black soccer in South Africa when three racial bodies, namely, the South African African Football Association (SAAFA), the South African Coloured Football Association (SACFA) and the South African Indian Football Association (SAIFA) formed the South African Soccer Federation (SASF) to further the interests of black football in a context in which the grip of apartheid was tightening following the victory of the National Party (NP) in 1948. This minority government implemented the policy of apartheid which attempted to separate South Africans along racial lines in all walks of life.<sup>3</sup> A.I. Kajee, an eminent Indian businessman and Natal Indian Congress (NIC) politician from Durban, "donated a £500 (around R35, 000 today) trophy to SASF for a biennial competition, organised since 1952, between African, Coloured and Indian "national teams".<sup>4</sup>

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1. While this author accepts that race does not have a biological basis, race was and remains a social and legal fact in South Africa. In this article "African" is used to refer to the indigenous population; "white" refers to persons of European descent; "Indian" refers to those whose ancestors came from present-day India, Pakistan and Bangladesh; and "Coloured" is used to refer to people of mixed-race. "Black" came into currency in the 1970s with the rise of the Black Consciousness Movement and was used to refer jointly to Indians, Africans and Coloureds. When used as an adjective it is not capitalised. The term "non-racial" is used in the same sense that multi-racial or interracial is used in other places such as the United States. Non-racial is the preferred term in South Africa because it is seen to imply the non-existence of race or "irrespective of race", whereas "multi-racial" implies an acceptance of the existence of races and possibility that these are fixed categories and imply distance between groups. See A. Burton, *Brown over Black. Race and the Politics of Postcolonial Citation* (Three Essays Collective, New Delhi, 2012), p 52.
2. See J. Nauright, *Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa* (David Philip, Cape Town, 1997), pp 124–156 for a discussion of the sports boycott and its differential impact on the different sports.
3. The executive of SASF in 1951–52 was M. John (SAIFA), J.H. Alves (SACFA), E.C. Jali (SAAFA), George Singh (honorary secretary), Albert Christopher (vice-president), E.G. Rooks (vice-president), S.L. Singh (president), R.V. Ngcobo (vice-president) and A. Harry Naidoo (honorary treasurer). On this see R. Lutchman, *South African Soccer Federation. Souvenir Brochure* (Mercantile Printers, Durban, 1951) p 9. John, Singh, Christopher, Rooks, George Singh, and A.H. Naidoo were all from Natal.
4. The biennial Kajee Trophy was played in 1952, 1954, 1956, 1958 and 1960, the year of the inter-race riots. See G.H. Calpin, *A.I. Kajee: His Work for the South African Indian Community*, (Iqbal Study Group, Durban, circa early 1950s) for a discussion of Kajee's life and role in sport and politics.

The tournament was enormously popular, with a record number of spectators attending. However, the popularity of the SASF matches ended cheerlessly in 1960 when a racial fracas took place at a soccer match between supporters of the “national” Indian and African teams at Curries Fountain in Durban. Matches organised under the SASF “heightened the interest of administrators and fired them with a desire to explore further fields” such as attempts to gain international recognition for the SASF as well as, in subsequent years, an attempt to remove “race” from SASF competitions and matches which were organised nationally rather than on a provincial basis.<sup>5</sup> Bernard Magubane, a sociologist writing at the time, noted that the removal of racially divided matches would “obviate any colour feeling that racially organised matches” caused among soccer followers.<sup>6</sup> This implies that the holding of racialised matches was not helping to improve relations between Indians, Africans, and Coloureds.

The infamous 1960 riots were not one of the deadliest football stampedes in South African soccer history in terms of lives lost, such as the 2001 Ellis Park stampede or the 1991 Orkney stadium disaster, two of the worst sporting disasters in South Africa, but it remains one of the darkest days in the annals of the country’s sporting history. This is in part because of the racial and political connotations attached to the riots,<sup>7</sup> and in part because the riots had a great impact on the course of soccer history in South Africa. While these riots were a significant moment in South Africa’s sporting history, both because of the events themselves but also because they facilitated non-racial sport, this event has received little attention and has barely been chronicled. Some of the major works on South African sport, including those by Archer and Bouillion, Nauright, Booth, Jarvis and even Alegi, whose focus is solely on soccer, barely mention this tournament or give close attention to the riots and their aftermath. Nauright mentions the formation of SASF but not the tournament; Booth and Archer and Bouillon likewise mention SASF but get their dates on its formation wrong. While Alegi does mention some of the matches and players he does not discuss the riots in any significant way.<sup>8</sup>

This article discusses the formation of SASF at a crucial juncture in South Africa’s political history, the Kajee Trophy tournament, the events on the day of the riots and their aftermath. It relies largely on contemporary newspaper reports in *The Leader*, *The Graphic*, *New Age* and *Ilanga Lase Natali*. These sources suffice for the purpose of this paper because the newspapers focused extensively on sport during that period and debated the various issues with great passion and insight. They also captured the feelings of activists and administrators at the time. Some of

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5. B. Magubane, “Sports and Politics in an Urban African Community: A Case Study of African Voluntary Organizations”, MSoc Science dissertation, University of Natal, 1963, p 79.
  6. Magubane, “Sports and Politics”, p 79.
  7. On 11 April 2001, 43 people were killed and 250 injured during a stampede at a football match at Ellis Park Stadium between Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates. In 1991, 42 people were killed at Orkney during another match between Pirates and Chiefs. These are South Africa’s best supported and most popular teams and in both instances the cause was overcrowding because the number of spectators exceeded the capacity of the ground. See P. Alegi, “Like Cows Driven to a Dip”: The 2001 Ellis Park Stadium Disaster in South Africa”, in P. Darby, M. Johnes and G. Mellor (eds), *Soccer and Disaster: International Perspectives* (Taylor & Francis, Oxford, 2005), pp 109–123.
  8. R. Archer and A. Bouillion, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism* (Zed Press, London, 1982), p 100; D. Booth, *The Race Game: Sport and Politics in South Africa* (Frank Cass, London, 1998), p 115; Nauright, *Sport, Cultures and Identities*, p 118; P. Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa* (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, Scottsville, 2004) pp 107–109.

these individuals are still alive, such as Ronnie Govender, but in light of problems associated with memory and oral history as a methodology,<sup>9</sup> indispensable and invaluable as it is for the history of the recent past, for the purposes of this study, those additional sources were not deemed necessary as we do have the opinions and feelings of individuals as the events were unfolding. Given the fact that virtually nothing is available on this tournament and the riots, this narrative makes a valuable contribution to the historiography of sports history in South Africa and provides a platform for more detailed analyses of this period.

### The South African Soccer Federation (SASF) and non-racialism

The history of soccer in South Africa is complex with a myriad of teams and associations formed. Nauright provides a good overview. He points out that there were African and Indian clubs in Durban by the 1880s. Associations took longer to develop and were mostly projects of the educated elite. The Johannesburg Bantu Football Association was formed in 1929; the Orange Free State Bantu Football Association was formed in 1930; and the Natal Bantu Football Association in 1931. A split in Johannesburg saw the formation of a Johannesburg African Football Association (JAFA) in 1932; and a South African African Football Association (SAAFA) was formed in 1930. Indians and Coloureds formed their own local, provincial and national organisations. There was a great deal invested in such associations which made officials reluctant to give up their positions in mergers. As Nauright points out:

Sport and political organisations have bestowed the greatest prestige within local and national communities. The opportunity to become a sport official provided one of the few avenues for political and administrative achievement for educated Blacks. Additionally, patronage or ownership of leading local clubs provided a chance for men to gain substantial reputations and importance ... Prestige was not the only benefit soccer officials received from being involved in administration. [Some] were known to have made a large portion of their personal wealth through sports and sports promotion.<sup>10</sup>

This must be kept in mind during this discussion because it explains the reluctance of some officials to give up their positions. The SASF was formed in Durban on 30 September 1951. Around 46 000 members of the three national Indian, African and Coloured associations affiliated to the SASF whose constitution did not bar anyone from membership on the basis of race, class, ethnicity, or language. The formation of SASF was important. It was, as Koonyaditse tells us, “the only truly multiracial football organisation that openly challenged apartheid principles” and sought, albeit unsuccessfully for decades, for Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) recognition.<sup>11</sup> SASF was “formed to coordinate the work of the provincial boards” and as from 1952, it organised the Kajee Trophy where “national teams”, “organised along racial lines, competed for the Kajee trophy”.<sup>12</sup> These games drew “large mixed race crowds for the matches in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town”.<sup>13</sup> In the early 1950s, soccer matches in

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9. See L. Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (Routledge, London, 2010), pp 78–105.

10. Nauright, *Sport, Cultures and Identities*, pp 110–111.

11. O.A. Koonyaditse, *The Politics of South African Football* (African Perspectives Publishing, Johannesburg, 2010), p. 35. The first attempt to fight for FIFA affiliation by SASF was led by George Singh, an Indian lawyer from Durban, in 1955. Many other recognition attempts followed for decades up until the South African Football Association (SAFA) gained recognition in 1991 after the dismantling of apartheid.

12. Magubane, “Sports and Politics”, p 79.

13. Alegi, *Laduma!* p 88.

Durban and Johannesburg attracted crowds that grew from between 5 000 and 10 000 at the beginning of the decade to between 20 000 and 25 000 spectators by the end of the decade.<sup>14</sup> But organising racially based national teams to advance non-racialism was paradoxical and the incongruity of this endeavour resulted in tension towards the end of the 1950s.

The origin of the SASF dates back to 1948 when A.J. Albertyn, vice-president of the South African Coloured Football Association (SACFA) travelled from Cape Town to meet with African SAAFA officials in Johannesburg.<sup>15</sup> A friendly match between Africans and Coloureds, won by the latter, was well received by the public. Indians were not involved in these discussions because the SAIFA had not formulated a position on football unity across racial lines. Indians were also absent from a follow-up meeting in Cape Town in May 1950, where a decision was taken to form a federation and D.R. Twala, who was also a member of the ANC Youth League, was appointed pro-tem president and A.J. Albertyn pro-tem secretary. A rematch between the African and Coloured teams was won once again by the Coloureds.

Following this meeting, Albertyn and Twala made overtures to Indian officials who agreed to participate in the proposed federation and a meeting was held in Johannesburg in March 1951 to discuss the way forward.<sup>16</sup> Agreement was reached in principle and the federation was formalised in Durban on 30 September 1951 when the first executive was elected.<sup>17</sup> The Bantu Football Association, with around 20 000 members across the country, refused to join the SASF.<sup>18</sup> This pointed to deeply entrenched notions of race and the difficulty of breaking down these barriers as well as the fact that certain officials had entrenched privileges that they wished to protect. The formation of the SASF meant that there were now two national soccer bodies in the country; the other was the Football Association of South Africa (FASA) which served white South Africans.

S. “Bobby” Harrypersadh, sports editor of *The Leader*, an ethnic newspaper formed in 1941 to serve the Indian community, expressed the hope that unity might lead to international participation and that “we shall then be able to show the world what equality of opportunity – as ably demonstrated by the sporting achievements of the West Indies and the US Negroes at the Olympics – can produce”.<sup>19</sup> In extending his congratulations to the federation, the Reverend Bernard Sigamoney, a Transvaal based Indian sports official and former trade unionist, delivered a powerful message on the power of sport:

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14. Alegi, *Laduma!* p 88.

15. Among the SAAFA officials who supported the formation idea was Dan Twala, popularly known as “Dan Dan Orange” because of his practice of rewarding players with oranges rather than money in times of scarcity. Twala, who had started the Moroka-Baloyi Cup competition in 1938, was instrumental in forming the Inter-Race Soccer Board, which regulated interracial friendly matches. A friendly match between associations was organized to coincide with the official formation of SASF. See Koonyaditse, *The Politics of South African Football*, p 36.

16. S.L. Singh, Reverend B. Sigamoney, William Ernest and Bob Pavadai represented Indians; H.C. Maggott, H.J. Lamb, J.A. van Harte and J. Barnard represented Coloureds; and F.J. Moidibedi, H.H. Zibi and L.C. Koza represented Africans. Twala and Albertyn attended in their capacity as president and vice-president respectively. See S.L. Singh, “Federation and its Future”, in Lutchman, *SASF Souvenir Brochure*, p 13.

17. Singh, “Federation and its Future”, in Lutchman, *SASF Souvenir Brochure*, pp 11–15.

18. Alegi, *Laduma!* p 107.

19. Lutchman, *SASF Souvenir Brochure*, p 23.

## Ngidi – Inter-Race Soccer

The Federation goes a long way in bringing together the three non-European races. The ultimate ideal of sport is that there should be no racial discrimination whatever. There should be one organisation in respect of each branch of sport in which all races play together ... Despite obstacles from outside as well as within, the gap (as races) will become narrower and narrower ... For all mankind essentially belongs to one race. We have one common heritage, common ties, and one common brotherhood. If we can work towards this ideal, then our grounds will be hallowed anvils on which the future of an African Federation of sport will be hammered out in a common brotherhood ... The trumpet of sport must sound throughout our cities, villages, and "dorps", until sportsmen wend their way to harmonising of all races to one common brotherhood, and there shall rise up to Heaven from the mortals of earth a loud Amen!<sup>20</sup>

The Reverend Sigamoney was reflecting here on the power of sport to unite people across the race divide. This was a sentiment shared by many black South Africans at a time when the progressive political movements in the country were moving towards joint political campaigns, such as the Defiance Campaign of 1952 and when the country was recovering from the terrible race riots of January 1949 between Indians and Africans in Natal. The need to bridge the racial became urgent.<sup>21</sup>

These changes took place in a broader context of movement towards political unity. The 1940s saw members of the ANC Youth League, such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and Oliver Tambo, assume positions of power within the ANC. They were elected to its National Executive in 1949 and helped revitalise the organisation. Some members of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), such as J.B. Marks and Moses Kotane, also exerted influence on the organisation. In 1949 the ANC adopted a Programme of Action to achieve freedom from white minority rule. Together with the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress, and the (white) Congress of Democrats, they embarked on a number of joint campaigns in the 1950s.<sup>22</sup>

Inter-race matches at provincial level had, in fact, preceded the national matches. The Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board (NISB), established in 1946, organised annual provincial matches between Africans, Coloureds and Indians. The provincial tournaments were very popular and attracted large multiracial crowds. Teams competed for the Singh Trophy, named after its sponsor. Though there had been no major incident of racial or spectator friction at these matches there was some tension as spectators supported teams along racial lines. The underlying racial currents which accompanied such matches and fears of some journalists, members of the public and administrators that racially-based matches were counter-productive would be realised in 1960.

By the late 1950s, in fact, in the context of national political developments and the Treason Trial, some activists and sports officials began suggesting that inter-race tournaments should be replaced by non-racial sports tournament. In the immediate aftermath of the 1959 Natal Inter-Race soccer tournament, sports journalist and later a famous playwright, Ronnie Govender wrote in *The Leader* that George Singh of SAIFA had told him that "administrators should put their

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20. B.L.E. Sigamoney, "Colour Bar and Sport", in Lutchman, *SASF Souvenir Brochure*, p 37.
  21. See I. Edwards and T. Nuttall, "Seizing the Moment: The January 1949 Riots, Proletarian Populism and the Structures of African Urban Life in Durban during the Late 1940s", Paper presented at History Workshop on "Structure and Experience in the Making of Apartheid", University of Witwatersrand, 6–10 February, 1990.
  22. Booth, *The Race Game*, pp 73–74.

organisation before their own personal aspirations of holding positions”.<sup>23</sup> SAIFA was due to hold its AGM on 30 May 1959 and Govender identified Bob Pavadai of the Eastern Cape, who was the first president of the South African Cricket Board of Control (SACBOC), as “not a very welcome man in Indian soccer circles” because he seemed “bent on smothering” the move by SAIFA to allow other races to participate in the Sam China Tournament,<sup>24</sup> a tournament in which Indian provincial teams had competed against each other since the turn of the twentieth century. Given the wider political and sporting changes, some sports administrators felt that such a tournament was an anomaly. In an open letter to SAIFA, Govender wrote:

Actually I should have started by saying ... there are no South African Indians. But that would have been childish and unrealistic wouldn't it? ... I will suggest that you endorse what your more progressive affiliates are clamouring for at the moment – throw open your doors wholeheartedly to other races. Your top officials have often – and most laudably – preached the gospel of the oneness of man – here is a chance to practise what you preach ... you can make the grand gesture by throwing open the Sam China Tourney in Natal this year to all races.<sup>25</sup>

The clamour for non-racial soccer grew louder in 1960. On 3 February 1960, the then British prime minister, Harold Macmillan delivered his renowned “Wind of Change” speech in the South African parliament in Cape Town.<sup>26</sup> The speech gave hope to African nationalists across the continent because it seemed to signal a change in attitude towards the apartheid regime. Macmillan acknowledged that Africans were justifiably claiming the right to rule themselves, and suggested that it was the responsibility of the British government to promote societies in which the rights of all individuals were upheld.<sup>27</sup> This “wind of change” was also evident on the sports fields and in the boardrooms. O.K. Joe, the *Ilanga* English section sports columnist, hinted that whilst the speech was a “password” in political circles, the “wind of change” was a symbol of hope as it was “beginning to blow in the non-White sports world”.<sup>28</sup>

The year in which Macmillan was delivering his speech, 1960, was witness to the massacre at Sharpeville in March; the ANC president, Chief Albert Luthuli’s call for the burning of passes; the banning of the ANC and PAC; the declaration of a state of emergency by the government; and the detention of thousands of activists without trial for five months from March to September. Pondoland was caught up in armed resistance; passes were introduced for African women; Nigeria

23. R. Govender, “Keep Out of Soccer, Pavadai”, *The Leader*, 15 May 1959, p 15.

24. Govender. “Keep Out of Soccer Pavadai”, *The Leader*, 15 May 1959, p 15.

25. R. Govender, “An Open Letter to SAIFA”, *The Leader*, 29 May 1959, p 16.

26. Macmillan said in the course of the speech: “In the twentieth century, and especially since the end of the war, the processes which gave birth to the nation states of Europe have been repeated all over the world. Fifteen years ago this movement spread through Asia. Many countries there, of different races and civilisations, pressed their claim to an independent national life. Today the same thing is happening in Africa, and the most striking of all the impressions I have formed since I left London a month ago is of the strength of this African national consciousness. In different places it takes different forms, but it is happening everywhere. The wind of change is blowing through this continent and whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must all accept it as a fact, and our national policies must take account of it.” See A. Boddy-Evans, “Wind of Change Speech by Harold Macmillan to the South African Parliament in 1960”, available at [http://africanhistory.about.com/od/eraindependence/a/wind\\_of\\_change1.htm](http://africanhistory.about.com/od/eraindependence/a/wind_of_change1.htm), accessed 12 September 2013.

27. Boddy-Evans, “Wind of Change Speech”.

28. O.K. Joe. “‘Wind of Change’ helps to Crush Racial Barriers in Non-European Sports”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 11 June 1960, p 10.

obtained independence; Indians celebrated their centenary in South Africa; and Patrice Lumumba was arrested in Congo (DRC).<sup>29</sup>

Developments on the sports fields must be viewed in this context of heightened political activity on the one hand and state repression on the other. In the aftermath of the 1959 inter-race tournament, there was much talk of non-racial and professional soccer in Natal. At its 23rd Biennial Conference in Durban over the first weekend of June 1959, SAIFA “opened its doors to all races” and stipulated that as from the date of the decision “any non-Indians will be able to play for any Indian Football Club” in the country.<sup>30</sup> The delegates unanimously decided against affiliation to the white-run FASA.<sup>31</sup>

The quest for non-racialism was rapidly gathering momentum at provincial level. Ramhori Lutchman, a prominent administrator was vocal in his criticism of racialised soccer.<sup>32</sup> He branded South African soccer, the national sport of the black masses, the most “racialist” sport. It “has not moved an inch towards integration except merely for resolutions”, Lutchman lamented. “It is time we did away with inter-race boards for as long as soccer is played as it is now there is no future.”<sup>33</sup> *Ilanga Lase Natali* lamented that South African black soccer had not moved towards non-racialism except for ineffective boardroom decisions.<sup>34</sup>

V.R. Noel, another NISB official, who had long called for an end to inter-race games, said that while the SA Sports Association (SASA) was trying to break the colour bar, the NISB was doing nothing to give practical effect to this drive and called for the immediate integration of soccer.<sup>35</sup> “Racial” football, it seems, was skating on thin ice but the official curtain had not yet come down. Ronnie Govender remained the most vocal journalist against inter-race soccer matches because he published a number of critiques in his weekly sports column in *The Leader*. In April 1960 he stated: “now is the time ... We’ve just had our feel of sham talk and false promises from our sporting bigwigs about the abolition of race divisions in sport”.<sup>36</sup> Govender pointed out that the NISB and SASF were continuing to stage inter-race matches despite criticism:

It should be clear by now that these matches have taken on the temper of a hothead. Let’s quit flirting with disaster and make a sincere effort to forge racial amity in sport. To make a start, let’s scrap the Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board. NOW ... Every time one race group plays another, everyone from the players to the spectators are acutely aware that they are sitting on the keg of dynamite. How often have I seen these kegs reach explosion point? It is miraculous that there have been no fearsome “incidents” as yet. But we cannot keep wilfully setting these kegs and then hoping for the best. There cannot be any real argument at this stage to carry on with racial divisions in sport. The latest popular argument that the race groups were not willing

29. T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* (Longman, London, 1983), pp 175–225.

30. “SAIFA Opens its Doors to All Races”, *Indian Opinion*, 5 June 1959, p 6.

31. “SAIFA Opens its Doors to All Races”, *Indian Opinion*, 5 June 1959, p 6.

32. In his book, *In the Manure*, Ronnie Govender describes Lutchman as a “smallish, dapper insurance and estate agent who had set himself up in a tiny little office in Grey Street”. He had “a mischievous but gentle smile”, but was a “feisty combatant” in the boardroom. His dream was non-racial football. See R. Govender, *In the Manure: Memories and Reflections* (David Philip, Cape Town, 2008), p 139.

33. R. Chetty, “Most Racialist Sport is Soccer”, *The Graphic*, 16 October 1959, p 10.

34. “Racialism in non-White Soccer – Officials View”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 24 October 1959, p 10.

35. R. Chetty, “Poor African Support for Inter-Race Soccer Criticised”, *The Graphic*, 16 October 1959, p 10.

36. R. Govender, “Scrap the Inter-Race Soccer Board Now”, *The Leader*, 8 April 1960, p 12.

to cooperate has been torn to shreds since the Indian organisations have thrown open their doors to all races. Africans and Coloureds in increasing numbers are not playing for their associations. In fact, one Indian association, the Lower South Coast Football Association, can now boast of having an African official, Mr. C. Mtimkhulu, who is its vice-president.<sup>37</sup>

Govender proposed a “solution” to the racial matches:

After the scrapping off the Inter-Race Board, how are we to set about lifting the race barriers? My plan, which some may call bold and revolutionary, is to set-up a completely non-racial provincial body with people who are really interested in doing away with racialism ... Let us cut off ... the speaking and have some action because the time for procrastination is over.<sup>38</sup>

Alegi suggests that the drive towards non-racialism and professionalism also had another source. The white soccer players and administrators had formed a professional league in 1959, the National Football League (NFL). It was sponsored by companies like British Petroleum (BP) and South African Breweries (SAB) and attracted large crowds. *Drum* magazine published numerous articles on the success of the league during 1959 and 1960 and questioned why black South Africans, to whom the game mattered so much more, could not do the same:

Why shouldn't we start our own Pro Soccer? Remember that soccer is just another game to the whites. Rugby gets the crowds. Soccer gets what is left. Now, for non-white South Africans, soccer is the National Game. Why shouldn't WE start our own professional inter-racial Soccer League? We've asked these questions in the past few weeks and, from clubmen and sports officials, the answer every time has been, "Yes, let's try"<sup>39</sup>

The success enjoyed by the white league and the fact that some black soccer stars were gaining recognition overseas, such as Stephen Mokone who was the first black South African to secure a professional contract when he signed with Cardiff City in 1956, were responsible for the push towards non-racial professional soccer. The race riots were the final nail in the coffin of those who opposed such a development.

The fifth SASF's Kajee Trophy of the triple-contested competition took place in 1960. The first match between the SA Indians and SA Africans took place at Curries Fountain, the iconic venue of black sport in South Africa,<sup>40</sup> on 3 July 1960. SA Africans were represented by stalwarts such as Petrus “Senzeni” Zulu, E. Mbuli, and Eliakim “Remember” Bophela. There was much criticism of the Indian

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37. Govender, “Scrap the Inter-Race Soccer Board Now”, *The Leader*, 8 April 1960, p 12.

38. Govender, “Scrap the Inter-Race Soccer Board Now”, p 12.

39. Alegi, *Laduma!* p 118.

40. Curries Fountain was originally established for Indian sports in the 1920s and catered for soccer, cricket, golf, tennis, athletics and go-karting. It is located in what is known as the Warwick Junction in Durban, an area that is home to schools, hospitals higher education institutions, the Market and the Greyville Race Course. See L. Rosenberg, S. Moodley and G. Vahed, *Curries Fountain: Sport, Politics, Identity* (Durban University of Technology, Durban, 2013); and L. Rosenberg, G. Vahed, A. Hassim, S. Moodley and K. Singh, *The Making of Place: The Warwick Junction Precinct, 1870s–1980s* (Durban University of Technology, Durban 2013). The ground was also the site of political rallies from the time of Mohandas K. Gandhi at the turn of the twentieth-century and was the major site of political rallies in the 1980s. Harrison lists Curries Fountain as one of the major struggle sites in South Africa. See P. Harrison, *South Africa's Top Sites: The Struggle* (New Africa Books, Cape Town, 2004). All the major football matches in the non-racial Federation Professional League from the 1960s to the 1980s were played at Curries Fountain.



team which was deemed not to be “national” as only one player from the Transvaal was included. The SA Indians team included the likes of Nukka Moon, Bala Chinsamy, Balray Mohan, Dharam Mohan, Thiri Rampath, Bob Pillay, T. Jamalodeen, Links Padayachee and Eddie Govender. There was much anticipation in all corners of the black sporting community regarding the outcome of the match.

Members of the public were aggrieved by the high ticket prices for the match. One fan, Johnny Evans, of May Street in Durban told *The Leader* that he had been “a soccer fan for countless number of years”, but when he received a handbill advertising the SASF match he was “surprised to see the admission for adults was 3 shillings plus 2 shillings for the stand”. He went on to express the view that “SASF are asking for a bit too much now, as a vast number of Indians, Coloureds and Africans are unemployed, and if prices of admission keep increasing I am sure the attendance figures will drop.”<sup>41</sup> The match was, however, postponed for undisclosed reasons as SASF did not publicly divulge the reasons for the cancellation. It was rescheduled to the general dissatisfaction of spectators.

### The 31 July 1960 riots

SASF rescheduled the match for 31 July 1960 but remained tight-lipped about the reasons for the cancellation. The re-match would go down as one of the “darkest” days in the annals of non-racial sport. *The Graphic* described the scenes as “unbridled fanaticism and one of the most serious disturbances ever to have occurred at a soccer match”.<sup>42</sup> The earlier lockout and crowd anger probably had something to do with the events on the day because a capacity crowd of 28 000 attended the match. This was a record crowd for a “non-white” soccer match and generated £2 542 pounds in gate takings;<sup>43</sup> also a new record. The crowd exceeded the ground’s capacity and many spectators broke through the barriers and ran onto the field before the match started. *The Leader’s* eyewitness wrote that “despite repeated appeals from the officials’ stand; supporters jumped over ... barriers and seated themselves on the ground”.<sup>44</sup> The police took no action against them.

*The Leader* reported that the tumult was sparked when the “Africans scored their second goal”; this is when “a section of the crowd was angered by the robust tactics of some of the players”.<sup>45</sup> *Ilanga* blamed the Indian fans for starting the trouble:

*Iphoyisa lomLungu elineminyaka engu 20, uFrans Koekemoer bamhisele ngebhodlela ekhanda, bamshaya nangezicathulo wathi uzama ukubaleka kwafumaniseka ukuthi udakwe izimpama zamaNdiya wasakazeka phansi.*<sup>46</sup>

(A 20-year-old white constable, Frans Koekemoer, was smashed with a bottle on his head. The Indian supporters also hit him with their shoes, slapped him and he collapsed from dizziness as he tried to run away.)

41. “A Bit too Much”, *The Leader*, 18 July 1960, p 11.

42. “Hooliganism at Curries”, *The Graphic*, 5 August 1960, p 12.

43. “What Sparked off Ugly Soccer Riot”, *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, pp 1 and 4.

44. “What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot”, *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, pp 1 and 4.

45. “What Sparked Off Ugly Soccer Riot”, *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, pp 1 and 4.

46. “Kwasuka Isidumo Esinamandla Kumdlalo WaBantu NamaNdiya”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 6 August 1960, p 1.

*The Graphic* reported that Koekemoer received severe facial injuries and was helped by Indians and Africans into the dressing room and from there taken by ambulance to the nearby Addington Hospital. *The Leader* wrote that “a European constable” was forced to “tail [run] when an angry mob turned on him”.<sup>47</sup> Reports in both African and Indian newspapers suggested that Indian spectators had indeed sparked the riots.

The crowd violence intensified and became uncontrollable. According to *The Graphic*, “a section of the spectators at the Race Course end began aiming bottles at the police standing near the goal post and it was then that several African fans retaliated”.<sup>48</sup> Some fans tried to help the police to calm their fellow spectators but violence flared again when the police began ejecting fans from the ground. In another part of the ground “an African policeman brandished a long knife and wounded a youth” and when the crowd turned on him he was “forced to flee”.<sup>49</sup> H.P. Ngwenya, president of Durban and District African Football Association (DDAFA), and other administrators appealed over the loudspeakers for calm. “Near the African goal two bottles were thrown at an African defender” as the match progressed and the spectators “surged onto the touchline”.<sup>50</sup> However, this skirmish was reported to have died down almost immediately.

The calm did not last long. When play resumed, an African player, Petrus “Senzeni” Zulu, was hit on the head by a bottle and pandemonium broke loose again. *Ilanga* reported on another injury:

*Kulimale futhi uSamuel Mzizi ofunda eLoram Secondary School eThekwini, okunguyena obevimba emeshini yokuqala ... bamshaye umlomo wayinqaba wababomvu nasekhanda futhi bamphisela ngamabhodlela, eshaywa yiwo amaNdiya belu.*<sup>51</sup>

(Another person injured was Samuel Mzizi of Loram Secondary School in Durban; he was the goalkeeper in the juniors' match. He was reportedly hit on the head by bottles thrown by Indians; his mouth and his head were full of blood.)

When Zulu, a player in the African team, was hit by a spectator this “sparked off a major clash”.<sup>52</sup> The players fled to the safety of the pavilion while order was restored. *The Graphic* reported that a bottle was hurled into the pavilion, causing severe head injuries to an elderly Indian woman. Furthermore, a Coloured woman was caught in the middle of the clash and was hit by a flying brick; an African spectator received head and facial injuries and an Indian with a maroon blazer was hit on the head with another flying “missile”.<sup>53</sup> Thousands of spectators fled down the embankments but the frenzied pursuers hurled bricks and stones, causing damage to the M.L. Sultan Technikon’s premises.<sup>54</sup> The crowd panicked and “people ran willy-nilly as bottles, stones and other missiles began to fly”.<sup>55</sup> The fence of the adjacent M.L. Sultan Technikon (now the Durban University of Technology) was smashed and about 18 windows were damaged. Indian and

47. “What Sparked off Ugly Soccer Riot”, *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, pp 1 and 4.

48. “Hooliganism at Curries”, *The Graphic*, 5 August 1960, p 12.

49. “What Sparked off Ugly Soccer Riot”, *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, pp 1 and 4.

50. “What Sparked off Ugly Soccer Riot”, *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, pp 1 and 4.

51. “Kwasuka Isidumo Esinamandla Kumdlalo WaBantu NamaNdiya”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 6 August 1960, p 1.

52. “What Sparked off Ugly Soccer Riot”, *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, pp 1 and 4.

53. “Hooliganism at Curries”, *The Graphic*, 5 August 1960, p 12.

54. “Hooliganism at Curries”, *The Graphic*, 5 August 1960, p 12.

55. “What Sparked off Ugly Soccer Riot”, *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, pp 1 and 4.

African officials appealed in English and IsiZulu for calm over loud speakers, while police reinforcements arrived to restore order. The dressing rooms in the stadium were changed into a temporary hospital as injured spectators were hurriedly attended to by members of the Red Cross.<sup>56</sup>

The match was abandoned a few minutes before the final whistle with the score 4-2 in favour of the Africans. While the match itself was academic in light of what happened subsequently, Bob Pillay opened the score for the Indians and minutes before half time, Links Padayachee made it 2-0. In the second half the Africans changed their game plan and adopted a more attacking approach. The intricate passing game between Daniel Mokoena, E. Mbelu, “Dee”, and Bophela paid dividends as Mokoena fired in the first goal for the Africans ten minutes into the second half. He then scored again for the Africans to draw level. Bophela completed his hat trick to put the Africans in front, 3-2. In the 70th minute E. Mbelu ensured the Africans’ triumph by scoring the fourth goal to make the score 4-2.

*Lapho aBantu besebethukuthela selisuka onyaweni lhlale onyaweni, sekudlalwa umlabalaba besafuna ukufaka amanye amagoli amaningi amaNdiya esephenduke izilima.*<sup>57</sup>

(By this time the Africans were playing a clever passing game as if they were playing chess. They were seeking more goals and the Indians were looking foolish.)

According to the *Ilanga* report, with a few minutes left to play and the match seemingly lost, the Indians began playing rough and made high and reckless tackles, while Indian spectators joined in what appeared to be an attack on Africans by throwing missiles and dangerous objects at African players. The referee abandoned the match.

In the immediate aftermath of the game, an unnamed NISB official was optimistic: *akaboni ukuthi ngenxa yalesibhelu ingase ingaqhubeki imidlalo lena* (“I do not see that the inter-race games will cease because of the crowd violence on the day”).<sup>58</sup> Ronnie Govender was at the match and felt that race was a key factor in sparking the conflict:

The small ground could take 20 000 at a stretch. There must have been 30 000 at that game. The tension was palpable and all it needed was a small incident and crowd violence could explode at any moment. Soccer is known as the peoples’ game because of its accessibility and the excitement that contact sport evokes. It also afforded an opportunity to let off steam. In an unequal society there is a helluva lot of steam, especially among the working classes. Introduce the element of race and you have an incendiary race.<sup>59</sup>

The NIC released a media statement concluding that the Curries’ incident was racially motivated. Politicus, a columnist for *The Leader*, who was actually A.I. Bhoola, a lawyer and contemporary of Nelson Mandela at the University of the Witwatersrand in the 1940s, described the NIC’s statements as “off-side”, adding

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56. “What Sparked off Ugly Soccer Riot”, *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, pp 1 and 4.

57. “USA WaBantu Wehlule OwamaNdiya 4- 2 eThekwini”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 6 August 1960, p 12.

58. “Kwasuka Isidumo Esinamandla Kumdlalo WaBantu NamaNdiya”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 6 August 1960, p 1.

59. Govender, *In the Manure*, pp 137–138.

that such statements gave a “twist which does no-one any good”.<sup>60</sup> Politicus downplayed the racial aspects of the violence:

It was no Indo-African riot or clash or whatsoever you will. In a highly excited crowd of some 20, 000 a few bad sportsmen lost control of themselves and spoil a good afternoon of football ... there was no general clash or riot. The great mass of spectators remained peaceful to the end. Africans were not belabouring Indians, and Indians were not humouring Africans. They stood shoulder to shoulder, African and Indian, watching the game and there were no signs of racial antagonism or anything of the sort.<sup>61</sup>

Politicus felt that as long as separate sports organisations, constitutions and bodies existed, it was surely a good thing to get different racial groups together to “share an afternoon in happy competition”.<sup>62</sup> He went on to state that the NIC had a duty to lead the way in forging non-racialism but had failed and that sports organisations could not be blamed for failing in this regard:

When they had the opportunity of setting the lead, our NIC politicians themselves failed to bring about a merger of the Congresses – again, pleading practical difficulties. If our most advanced politicians fail at the topmost level to set the correct lead, little wonder it is, then, that our sports organisations have failed to abolish communalism in sport. Sport and politics go hand in hand, and politics runs through the whole pattern of South African society.<sup>63</sup>

Ronnie Govender disagreed with Bhoola. The crowd violence convinced him that “racial football had to go”. He argued that “it was a recipe for racial conflict and, above all, it played into the hands of the apartheid regime” by suggesting that racial integration was doomed to fail.<sup>64</sup>

This debate over racially separate sports bodies reflects a wider political debate, namely, should organisations such as the NIC continue to retain their ethnic and racial identities and co-operate with the ANC politically or should the NIC disband and merge into a larger non-racial political entity because retaining the “Indian” in the NIC perpetuated racial and ethnic consciousness. NIC activists countered that apartheid political geography, with its segregated residential arrangements, justified retaining the NIC to facilitate political organisation, while cooperating with the ANC.<sup>65</sup>

The Curries Fountain uproar spurred another outcry against inter-race matches and calls for the outright abolition of matches played along racial lines. Calls from all sides for an end to such matches filled the newspapers. The next publication of *The Leader* was highly critical of inter-race matches. The sports editor of *The Leader* wrote a lead article on the publication’s front page, headlined “Ban Racial Soccer Now”. The article echoed Ronnie Govender’s argument that inter-race soccer was inherently “dangerous”. While welcoming SAIFA’s decision to henceforth “accept players of any race”, the editor felt that this was not enough. As he put it:

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60. Politicus, “Indian Congress were ‘off-side’”, *The Leader*, 12 August 1960, p 8.

61. Politicus, “Indian Congress were ‘off-side’”, *The Leader*, 12 August 1960, p 8.

62. Politicus, “Indian Congress were ‘off-side’”, *The Leader*, 12 August 1960, p 8.

63. Politicus, “Indian Congress were ‘off-side’”, *The Leader*, 12 August 1960, p 8.

64. Govender, *In the Manure*, p 139.

65. A. Desai and G. Vahed, “A Case of ‘Strategic Ethnicity’?” *The Natal Indian Congress in the 1970s*, *African Historical Review*, 46:1, (2014): 22-47.

## Ngidi – Inter-Race Soccer

For too long now we have had the wool pulled over our eyes. There is absolutely no justification for racial soccer. In the interest of fostering racial harmony and having a better argument for recognition by the Federation of International Football Associations we say to SASF: "down with racialism in soccer".<sup>66</sup>

Ronnie Govender wrote that he did not comment in-depth on the Curries Fountain incident because he was "getting tired" of singing the same mantra. For him, the incident was a "heavy blow" to sport in the country and he laid the blame solely at the feet of administrators:

I am getting tired, and so are a good many people, in pointing out the glaring faults in the administration of the game which in the end must take responsibility four-square, not only for Sunday's ugly incident but also for the tipsy survey picture that the sport now presents.<sup>67</sup>

A.B. Moosa of Kajee, Moosa & Company, the company that sponsored the coveted A.I. Kajee Cup, wrote to the SASF secretary, George Singh:

It has occurred to me that these inter-racial matches, rather like the international competitions of the Olympics games, too often incite group rivalries to an emotional level, and that as a result we have exhibitions of friction that do the cause of racial harmony great harm.<sup>68</sup>

Moosa added that the very ends desired by the donors and the "highest ideals" of racial harmony put forward by the late A.I. Kajee were defeated by inter-racial tensions on and off the sports fields. Moosa expressed sympathy with those who had been injured and the administrators who had good intentions, but called for the abolition of inter-racial competitions at provincial and national levels. He recommended that in future, teams should be non-racial as a way to improve race relations rather than keep the teams separate, which perpetuated racial divisions:

I have wondered whether it would not be better if these competitions were not inter-provincial, non-racial matches between teams made up of Indians, Coloured and Bantus on each side, instead of being inter-racial matches ... Much of this racial rivalry and friction would disappear and instead a sense of co-operation and friendship be encouraged.

Moosa emphasised that A.I. Kajee was a "believer in the cause of racial harmony ... did so much to encourage it" and was "an avowed fighter of racial harmony" who would not have wished for such racial antagonism.<sup>69</sup> He urged the SASF to act quickly and decisively.

People in the Transvaal were also worried about the strong racial feeling at inter-race games. The *New Age*, a left-wing newspaper, reported that a "nasty incident was narrowly avoided" and appealed for an end to these "troublesome" games, opining that "the sooner we stop these [inter-race] matches which cause racial ill-feeling the better".<sup>70</sup> In a letter to *The Leader*, D.N. Band, who described himself as a "sportsman" from Cape Town, expressed his views concerning soccer in Natal:

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66. Sports Editor, "Ban Racial Soccer Now", *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, p 1.

67. R. Govender, "Soccer has been Dealt a Vicious\* Blow", *The Leader*, 5 August 1960, p 12.

68. "End Inter-Racial Games", *The Graphic*, 19 August 1960, p 12.

69. R. Govender. "Mr Moosa's Hot Potato Should Shake Soccer Federation", *The Leader*, 15 August 1960, p 12.

70. "Sports Flashes by Recorder", *New Age*, 13 October 1960, p 8.

The Coloureds and Indians in Natal are apparently reluctant on integration, the Africans in Transvaal and Durban are also selfishly jealous of their identity, but if the principle is adopted by the Federation, integration and the complete removal of racial tags must come about even if not overnight.<sup>71</sup>

It appears that officials' self-interest was a thorn in the flesh of forging the path of non-racial soccer. This was the first time that such incidents had been reported since the launch of inter-race matches. While there were many incidents of violence involving African clubs at domestic level, what made this incident different was the racial aspect to it. As Bernard Magubane observed in the 1960s, "in racially organised matches the loyalty of the spectators generally followed racial lines". He added that this did not usually culminate in racial clashes even though the atmosphere was often "fraught with the danger of violent racial rioting". Spectators' appropriate behaviour towards members of other racial groups was attributed to the norm of "racial good manners" which organisers encouraged so as to improve racial harmony and show whites that the "other" could handle their affairs.<sup>72</sup>

After the Curries Fountain fracas, the NISB organised a benefit match between composite non-racial Southern and Northern Natal teams on 14 August 1960 at the Somtseu Road ground. The benefit match had a dual purpose: to raise funds for the family of Kista Naidoo, a long-serving member of NISB who had died in a car accident, and for those who were injured at Curries Fountain. Southern Natal won the match by three goals to zero. This was clearly seen as a gesture that mixed-race or non-racial matches represented the future.

### The push for non-racialism

The issues of non-racialism and professional soccer, which were being discussed around this time, led to a great deal of debate among administrators. An example of these squabbles was noted by *New Age*:

The national soccer wrangle has become even more complicated as a result of the squabbles in Durban. There have been charges and counter-charges between top SAIFA officials George Singh and Louis Nelson, leading to the resignation of the latter. All this is not helping the cause of soccer.<sup>73</sup>

This emphasises our point that administrators seemed to allow egos and personal interests to stand in the way of uniting soccer. At its biennial meeting in Durban on the weekend of 9 and 10 October 1960, the SASF passed several resolutions which had important consequences for soccer nationally. SASF unanimously agreed to the motion proposed by A.J. Albertyn of SACFA and seconded by the Rev. Bernard Sigamoney of SAIFA, to "accept the principle of full integration and the abolition of all units".<sup>74</sup> All racial barriers were to be removed and inter-race tournaments abolished as they were perceived to encourage racial friction. It was also agreed to form provincial non-racial soccer boards under the aegis of the SASF and to "embrace professional soccer alongside amateurism".<sup>75</sup>

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71. Letter to the Editor, "Cape Sportsman's Appeal for Soccer Truce", *The Leader*, 23 September 1960, p 8.

72. Magubane, "Sports and Politics", p 29.

73. "Sports Flashes by Recorder", *New Age*, 6 October 1960, p 8.

74. "SASA Takes Resolutions", *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 5 November 1960, p 8.

75. "SA Soccer Federation Accepts Integration and Professional Soccer", *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 15 October 1960, p 10.

For *Ilanga* journalist, O.K. Joe, these “solutions showed that some new and brisk thinking was done by officials” before the meeting.<sup>76</sup> S.L. Singh was elected president of the new body; the vice-presidents were Reggie Ngcobo, E.G. Rooks, and A. Christopher; George Singh was the secretary, and Charles M. Pillay was elected treasurer.<sup>77</sup> O.K. Joe hoped that the move towards professional soccer would enable players to be taken care of in terms of pay, insurance benefits, coaching and proper administration.<sup>78</sup>

Motholo, an executive member of the Natal African Football Association (NAFA), surprised delegates when he told them that from the African standpoint, professional soccer was already practised; “it is already there”, he said, as many clubs were “buying off” top-ranking footballers “quietly”.<sup>79</sup> Some delegates were sceptical about the idea of pioneering professional football. However, O.K. Joe felt that the move towards professional soccer was a positive development that had the potential to break down existing racial barriers.<sup>80</sup>

The SASF’s decision was in part forced by a resolution passed by the FIFA Congress in Rome in August 1960 that any national soccer association seeking affiliation to FIFA had to be “open to all who practise football in that country, whether amateur, ‘non-amateur’ or professional and without any racial, religious, or political discrimination”. The SASF aspired to affiliation to FIFA and thus had to embrace non-racialism. The more immediate consequence of FIFA’s resolution was that the FASA, which had an all-white membership, was given one year to abide by this resolution. The apartheid policy of racially segregated sports, however, prevented FASA from abiding by the Rome resolution and FASA was suspended from FIFA on 25 September 1961.<sup>81</sup> For the next three decades, the boycott of South African sport was an important part of the anti-apartheid struggle.<sup>82</sup>

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76. “SA Soccer Federation Accepts Integration and Professional Soccer”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 15 October 1960, p 10.
  77. “SA Soccer Federation Accepts Integration and Professional Soccer”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 15 October 1960, p 12.
  78. “Give Us Professional Soccer’ – is our Plea”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 12 November 1960, p 12.
  79. “Africans Should Adopt Professional Soccer”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 24 October 1960, p 10.
  80. “Africans Should Adopt Professional Soccer”, *Ilanga Lase Natali*, 24 October 1960, p 10.
  81. SASF, after its formation 1951, applied three times to take FASA’s place in FIFA. While not succeeding, its persistent protests led to FIFA’s adoption of the Rome Resolution which led to FASA’s suspension in 1961 for failing to operate as a non-racial association. See P. Darby, “Stanley Rous’s ‘Own Goal’: Football Politics, South Africa and the Contest for the FIFA Presidency in 1974”, *Soccer and Society*, 9, 2, April 2008, p 263.
  82. Opposition to apartheid sport would be led by the South African Council on Sport (SACOS) which was formed on 17 March 1973. “No normal sport in an abnormal society” became their slogan. See A. Desai, K. Reddy, V. Padayachee, and G. Vahed, *Blacks in Whites: A Century of Sporting Struggles in Kwazulu Natal, 1880–2002* (University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 2002), pp 350–359. Apartheid policy did not sit still. In response to growing international pressure, the government was forced to reconsider its policies during the 1970s. In April 1971, the prime minister John Vorster announced his “multi-national” sports policy, in terms of which South Africa’s four “nations” could play each other at national level provided there were international competitors as well. Politically, this vision was carried to its extreme with the Bantustan policy that attempted to create homelands for each of South Africa’s racial and ethnic groups. There was confusion as the Minister of Sport, Piet Koornhof, gave tacit approval to mixed sport while his officials gave contrary signals. Koornhof told journalist Donald Woods that he could not officially sanction the end of racially segregated sport but that officials would be told to turn a blind eye to the laws. See Booth, *The Race Game*, p 97.

Not only did the riots of 1960 mark the end of the Kajee Trophy, but the vision of professional soccer in South Africa also came to fruition when a non-racial South African Soccer League (SASL) was formed the following year (in 1961). The year 1960 also saw important developments on the political front. March 1960 marked the beginning of an international boycott of South African goods in protest against apartheid, while in South Africa it marked the beginning of a three-month boycott of celebrations to mark 50 years of the Union of South Africa on 31 May 1960. The first week of March saw hundreds of Indian and African volunteers lining up outside the Durban City Hall as the Group Areas Board began its hearings. Thousands of anti-apartheid activists spent several months in prison for their part in the protests. It is apposite that the move towards non-racialism should have taken place in 1960, the year in which Indians celebrated the centenary of their arrival in South Africa. The NP government continued to describe Indians as a foreign element that should be repatriated to India.<sup>83</sup> At various rallies marking this occasion, leaders like Dr G.M. Naicker and Fatima Meer took the opportunity to emphasise that Indians regarded themselves as South African citizens and wanted to be accepted as such.<sup>84</sup> What better way to demonstrate this than to be part of a larger soccer entity even if linking with the ANC politically was not on the agenda.

## Conclusion

Judging from newspaper reports, the Kajee Trophy matches were an eagerly anticipated part of the South African soccer scene. They drew large crowds across the black racial divide and registered record-breaking attendance. Although the matches involved African, Coloured and Indian players, they attracted some white spectators too; the colour bar was not part of the stadiums' entry requirements.<sup>85</sup> Fans shared seats and standing space regardless of race. However, this was not the case at matches between white teams at the Kingsmead Football Stadium where black spectators occupied a separate area in the stadium. Under apartheid, Africans, Indians and Coloureds developed parallel sports structures and rarely socialised across racial lines. This fortified race identities. In this context, the inter-race tournament was an important initiative. Officials were eventually obliged to blow the final whistle on such games for several reasons.

The matches failed to fulfil the purpose for which they were designed – to soothe tensions between race groups. At first glance, the design of the matches was not a desirable solution. It is highly likely that Coloured supporters supported the Coloured team, Indians the Indians team and Africans supported "their" team. Local newspapers also perpetuated an "us against them" mentality. The 1960 racial friction at Curries Fountain remains one of the darkest days of South African

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83. The NP's election manifesto stated: "Indians are a foreign and outlandish element which is inassimilable. They can never become part of the country and must, therefore, be treated as an immigrant community. The party accepts as a basis of its policy the repatriation of as many Indians as possible". See A. Desai and G. Vahed, *Monty Naicker: Between Reason and Treason* (Shuter & Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 2010), p 261.
  84. For example, speaking in Ladysmith on 12 November 1960, Dr G.M. Naicker, said: "A century is an important milestone in the life of many people. It is time to plan for the future not in isolation but with the rest of South Africa so that we can truly say that we have not only made a fitting contribution in a multi-racial society but that we were the joint architects of a truly non-racial democracy ... We as a community have never asked for preferential treatment as a minority group." See Desai and Vahed, *Monty Naicker*, pp 366–367.
  85. In a famous 1962 case, *State vs Brandsma*, goalkeeper Koos Brandsma of Lincoln City was charged for playing at a venue which was not a declared white area, Brandsma being white. Brandsma was defended by Enver Hassim and was acquitted on appeal. See "A Tribute to Comrade Enver Hassim", *Apdusa Views*, 97, December 2010.



soccer history, not only because of what happened, but because of the implications for the broader project of improving relations across the race groups. In the context of existing tensions between Indians and Africans, this was untenable to organisers who came to believe that the “mixed teams” organised by both the Transvaal and Natal Inter-race Boards were preferable to the racial matches. They were not a frequent occurrence but helped to pave the way for non-racial soccer in the 1960s.

Inter-race matches contradicted the path to non-racial football being charted by Dennis Brutus and other outstanding fighters for non-racial sport in South Africa. They sent delegates to the world Olympic Committee and FIFA in the late 1950s to argue that apartheid South Africa should be barred from international sport. These two bodies were influential in removing South Africa from the international arena. It therefore followed that local sporting associations should lead by example and eradicate segregated sport within the country.

The “wind of change” was already blowing away racialisation in other “black” sporting codes such as boxing, tennis and cricket. Soccer, the so-called national sport of black South Africans, was late on the scene but followed the same path with the introduction of non-racial professional soccer. After heated arguments between 1958 and 1960, professional soccer materialised in Natal. The parent body, SASF, launched the non-racial South African Soccer League (SASL). The eradication of “race” from black soccer was a powerful statement of intent in the long journey to non-racial soccer in South Africa, coupled with international recognition. It was only in 1991, when SAFA adopted non-racial principles and re-affiliated to FIFA, that South Africa took its first steps towards genuine, non-racial soccer and international competition.

### Abstract

The 1950s were witness to experiments in “inter-race” soccer<sup>86</sup> because racially-based African, Indian, and Coloured teams played against each other at provincial and national levels. Sports officials felt that this was a positive development as teams were breaking racial barriers. However, as the decade wore on and the Defiance Campaign of 1952 and the Treason Trial (1956–1961) heightened political consciousness, sports officials and many activists came to believe that racialised teams were anomalous and were in fact exacerbating race consciousness. The fears of critics of inter-race soccer matches materialised when riots broke out at a soccer match between the South African Indian XI and the South African Africans XI at Curries Fountain, Durban, on 31 July 1960. These riots took on racial overtones. This article discusses the inauguration of inter-race tournaments, the riots themselves, and the aftermath of the riots. A key argument is that the riots played an important role in bringing about non-racial football in South Africa in the 1960s.

**Key words:** Sport and politics; inter-race football; July 1960 riots; non-racial football; South African Football Association (SAFA).

### Opsomming

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86. Soccer and football are used interchangeably in this article. Football is the official name and is used mostly in European countries, whereas soccer is used more commonly in America and Australia.

## Ngidi – Inter-Race Soccer

Gedurende die 1950s het eksperimente in “veel-rassige” sokker plaasgevind. Rasgebaseerde swart, Indier en gekleurde spanne het op provinsiale en nasionale vlak teen mekaar gespeel. Sportamptenare het gevoel dat dit ’n positiewe ontwikkeling was, en dat rasseskiedings deurbreek is. In die loop van die dekade het veldtogte van verset en die hofsaak van hoogverraad (Treason Trial, 1956–1961) egter politieke bewussyn aangewakker. Talle aktiviste het standpunt ingeneem op die saamstel van spanne op ’n rassebasis en was oortuig dat rassebewussyn so aangewakker word. Die vrese van die kritici van veelrasige sokker is bewaarheid toe onluste uitgebreek het gedurende ’n sokkerwedstryd tussen twee spanne, die Suid-Afrikaanse Indiese XI en die Suid-Afrikaanse swart XI by Curries Fountain, Durban, op 31 Julie 1960. Hierdie artikel bespreek die daarstelling van veelrassige toernooie, die onluste en die nadraai van die onluste. ’n Belangrike argument is dat die onluste ’n belangrike rol in die totstandkoming van nie-rassige sokker in Suid-Afrika gedurende die 1960s.

**Sleutelwoorde:** Sport en politiek; inter-ras voetbal; Juli3 1960 opstande; nie-rassige sokker; Suid-Afrikaanse Voetbal Assosiasie (SAFA).