

Granny Football Fever

TRAILER

A penalty shootout is usually full of tension – and even if the players are mostly in their sixties and the soccer match is just for fun – scoring a goal is still a great achievement!

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SCRIPT

COMMENTARY

A penalty shootout is usually full of tension – and even if the players are mostly in their sixties and the soccer match is just for fun – scoring a goal is still a great achievement!

This is the Vakhegula Vakhegula [*ba-ke-goo-la*]. *Vakhegula* means grandmother in Tsonga. The team was started two years ago to help senior citizens get some exercise. They train twice a week.

83 year old Nora Makhubela is a center and the oldest here.

ITV, NORA MAKHUBELA, Football Player (Xitsonga)

“I have had stroke six times, before I started playing, I couldn’t walk properly, my legs used to ache a lot, now I feel better, I can even run faster than you! I want to thank God for this, I used to do home chores, working in the fields, but we would still be tired and unhealthy. But with football, it’s different, you exercise your whole body, and you don’t feel pain anymore.”

ITV, DAVID MAAKE, Team coach (English)

“I’m very happy because I think these grannies are playing very well, not because they are playing to win but because they stay healthy and we are always enjoying that. I don’t take them as grannies anymore because to me they have become friends because we spend the whole day together; laughing and doing everything and I have people I can share my problems with.”

COMMENTARY

Besides improving their health – soccer has also helped some of the ladies develop an interest in the game. South Africa hosts the World Cup this year and some team members are eager to watch the games.

ITV, NORA MAKHUBELA, Football Player (Xitsonga)

“I wish God could protect me and help me to live until 2010, I also pray a lot. Many people have not lived till this age - I just want to thank God. Thank you so much and can you also keep me in your prayers?”

COMMENTARY

The players buy their own kit and even help fund competitions against other teams. Since they have a match tomorrow - those who can hand in their contributions as practice winds up.

On the day of the tournament, Norah rushes through her chores at home. She lives here with her son and grandchildren.

Soon her team mates arrive to pick her up.

By the time they get to the pitch, fans are already gathering to support them.

Though their opponents are a bit younger and score early Vakhegula Vakhegula seen here in black and white isn’t intimidated and keep going to the end of the game.

ITV, ROSINA (Xitsonga)

“I am happy to be here to come and support my granny. Football improves their health, it lowers their high blood pressure and also keeps their sugar level in check”

ITV, MPHO POPELA (English)

“I would like to encourage the grannies to keep playing soccer so that they can be fit and even those who are at home. It’s something that can keep them busy, they mustn’t sit there doing nothing.”

COMMENTARY

South Africa’s granny teams wanted to play a curtain raiser match for the World Cup, though their request was turned down, the 2010 World Cup Committee is now looking into the possibility of organizing a future World Cup just for grannies.

SHOTLIST

NKOWANKOWA TOWNSHIP – NORTH OF JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

1. CAPTION: NKOWANKOWA TOWNSHIP 600 KMS NORTH OF JOHANNESBURG

2. VARIOUS OF GRANNIES SCORING A PENALTY AND CHEERING

3. COACH BLOWING WHISTLE

4. VARIOUS OF GRANNIE KICKING A BALL AND FALLING DOWN

(SOUNDBITE) (Xitsonga) FOOTBALL PLAYER NORA MAKHUBELA SAYING:

“I have had stroke six times, before I started playing, I couldn’t walk properly, my legs used to ache a lot, now I feel better, I can even run faster than you!

I want to thank God for this, I used to do home chores, working in the fields, but we would still be tired and unhealthy. But with football, it’s different, you exercise your whole body, and you don’t feel pain anymore.”

5. (SOUNDBITE) (English) TEAM COACH, DAVID MAAKE, SAYING:

“I’m very happy because I think these grannies are playing very well, not because they are playing to win but because they stay healthy and we are always enjoying that.

I don't take them as gogos anymore because to me they have become friends because we spend the whole day together; laughing and doing everything and I have people I can share my problems with."

6. VARIOUS OF GRANNIES PLAYING

7. (SOUNDBITE) (Xitsonga) FOOTBALL PLAYER, NORA MAKHUBELA, SAYING:

"I wish God could protect me and help me to live until 2010, I also pray a lot, many people have not lived till this age, I just want to thank God, thank you so much and can you also keep me in your prayers?"

8. VARIOUS OF TEAM MEMBERS PAYING UP MEMBERSHIPS

9. VARIOUS OF GRANNY NORAH DOING HOUSE CHORES AT HOME

10. VARIOUS OF TEAM MEMBERS PICKING GRANNY NORAH UP AND GOING FOR THE GAME

11. VARIOUS OF FANS CHEERING AT THE PITCH

12. GOAL BEING SCORED

13. (SOUNDBITE) (Xitsonga) SOCCER FAN, ROSINA SAYING:

"I am happy to be here to come and support my granny. Football improves their health, it lowers their high blood pressure and also keeps their sugar level in check"

14. (SOUNDBITE)(English) SOCCER FAN, MPHO POPELA SAYING:

"I would like to encourage the grannies to keep playing soccer so that they can be fit and even those who are at home. It's something that can keep them busy, they mustn't sit there doing nothing."

15. VARIOUS OF GRANNIES DANCING

16. GRANNIES POSING FOR GROUP PHOTO

END

Source: Africa Journal