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CARIBBEAN NEWSLETTER

For the Love of the Game | 2022 ICC U19 World Cup Edition

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World Cup! The Epitome For Any Athlete

Editor's Word

INNOCENT M. NDAWULA

Originally conceived as a feature in Australia's Bicentennial celebrations, the International Cricket Council (ICC) Under-19 Cricket World Cup has come a long way since it started in 1998.

Take a look at the figures: in 2004 the ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup in Bangladesh boasted 16 teams, total crowds of 350,000 and hand a television audience running into the hundreds of millions. On that basis, it is indisputable the event is truly global but it was not always that way.

The first tournament in 1988, had only eight teams, it took place, for the most part, in Australia and although it was viewed at the time as a success, it was not repeated for a decade. It only returned to the schedule in South Africa 1998 in the wake of the launch of the ICC's Development Programme as part of an attempt to 'globalise' the game but since then it has grown from strength to strength.

Many global superstars are a product of this iconic showpiece. The 1988 edition boasted of a galaxy of future Test Cricket captains like Brian Lara and Jimmy Adams (West Indies), Michael Atherton (England) and Inzamam ul-Haq (Pakistan) as well as Mushtaq Ahmed (Pakistan) and Chris Cairns (New Zealand).

Current world beaters like Eoin Morgan (England), Chris Gayle (West Indies), who had not been named in the original squad but went on to finish as Best Batsman with 364 runs at 1998 meet, Australia's Xavier Doherty was the top wicket-taker at the 2002 event with 16 wickets from seven matches.

Uganda's golden generation that played at the 2006 showpiece in Colombo, Sri Lanka boasts of some of the longest serving players that rose from the junior ranks to the senior team. Until recently Davis Arinaitwe Karashani captained the national side for a decade that also had his U-19 skipper Hamza Almuzahim Saleh, Emmanuel Isaneez, Arthur Kyobe, Roger Mukasa, Patrick Ochan, Ronald Ssemenda and Charles Waiswa.

The current Baby Cricket Cranes side, as our U-19 team is referred to, will be bubbling with enthusiasm on the country's third appearance at the World Cup. The Uganda Cricket Association (UCA) have prepared the multi-faceted squad, tutored by two former U-19 players; Ivan Thawithemwira (1998-2001) and Robinson Turinawe (1996-97), in the best-way possible.

Expect the Pascal Murungi all-native Ugandan side to fearlessly showcase their exciting brand of cricket and possibly claim a scalp or two with the 'whole' world watching. The camp is pumped up and raring to go. It cannot get any bigger!

**Editor,
Innocent M. Ndawula**



Great Ambassadors Of Uganda

NCS/UOC Message

DR. DONALD RUKARE

The year 2021 has been one full of challenges occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic which severely disrupted national, regional and international sporting calendars.

Cricket was not spared as well.

That said, Uganda Cricket Association (UCA) was able to weather the turbulence and ensure that their Under 19 boys are well prepared enroute to qualifying for the World Cup in West Indies.

This will be the third time that Uganda makes an appearance at the International Cricket Council (ICC) U-19 World Cup and this makes us very proud as a sporting nation.

We know that the boys will be great ambassadors for Uganda on and off the oval and we wish them all the best as they compete against the best in the world.

We commend the UCA for its visionary leadership that has ensured that cricket in Uganda continues to grow rapidly. We pledge our support going forward in 2022.

Dr. Donald Rukare

Chairman National Council of Sports (NCS),

President Uganda Olympic Committee



Go Make Us Proud, Boys!

Chairman's Message

MICHAEL NUWAGABA

It has taken us 15 years to be back at the ICC U-19 World Cup and this comes at the time when so many things are uncertain in the world due to the Covid-19 pandemic

This achievement is a reward of consistent years of investing in our development programmes and it's finally paying off when we see a team going to represent Uganda at the World Cup. The work will continue for us as an Association to make sure that this generation of players goes on to achieve great and even greater things for Uganda.

We are going to come up against great competition at the World Cup but we have a lot of faith in the technical team that has prepared the team well amidst all the challenges in this coronavirus pandemic era that comes with stringent Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) like teams having exercise high levels of hygiene as they camp in bio-bubble environments.

As the Uganda Cricket Association (UCA) Board, we have done our best to make sure the side adequately prepares for the tournament and we know they will make us very proud. On behalf of the board, we wish the boys a great World Cup experience and we hope they are able to seize the moment and run with it. Good luck, boys!

Michael Nuwagaba,
Chairman UCA



U-19 World Cup Is A Platform For Future Stars

CEO's Message

MARTIN ONDEKO

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2021 was an incredible year for us at Uganda Cricket Association (UCA). From winning the social impact ICC Global Development Award to progressing to the ICC T20 World Cup Global Qualifiers in Zimbabwe and then earning the continent's slot to the ICC U-19 World Cup. We are still dreaming. Getting back to the world stage after 15 years was without doubt the biggest achievement for the year. The youngsters dared to dream and made the nation proud by pulling off a heist, against all odds after losing the opening fixture.

Playing at the World Cup is a dream for everyone and prepares players for their respective senior national teams. As we go to the West Indies, we shall aim at making a good account of ourselves as well as market the ever-growing brand that is Uganda Cricket. The tournament will give an opportunity to boys to showcase their talent.

Uganda is in the same group as India, South Africa and Ireland. It's a huge opportunity for the boys to compete against the best at the world stage.

We would like to thank the government of Uganda and all our stakeholders for the support towards the National Under-19 Team.

We are looking forward to a 2022 where focus will be put on youth cricket so that Uganda is a regular at the coveted Youth World Cup. I, unreservedly, wish the team all the best at this prestigious tournament. Make Uganda proud!!

Martin Odeko

Chief Executive Officer, Uganda Cricket Association





COACHES COMBO

Thawi, Turinawe partnership augurs well for squad cohesion

It is not surprising to see Ivan Thawithemwira and Robinson Turinawe combine as coaches for the national junior men's cricket team – The Baby Cricket Cranes. The pair are among the group currently handling teenage talent from coaches' conveyor belt system of the Uganda Cricket Association (UCA) structure.

And their combo brings something special. They have both built some stellar chemistry with the 15-man unit that is due to make history as the third team to play at the coveted International Cricket Council (ICC) U-19 World Cup in the West Indies.

Coach Thawithemwira has inspired and bred a number of players through Challengers Cricket Club and his former school Nyakasura as well as at his own Karago Academy.

Many can attest that he has modelled his skipper Pascal Murungi.

But, Thawi's assistant Turinawe has equally bred many who are set to battle for a ticket to the West Indies 2022 showpiece. "I worked with eight boys at under-15 level," Turinawe said before the team departed for Kigali for the continent's five-nation qualifying day. He has insights about the styles of play, characters and attitudes of Juma Miyagi, assistant captain Ismail Munir, Ronald Lutaaya, Edwin Nuwagaba, Christopher Kidega, Ronald Omara, Ronald Opio and Kush Vekaria.

Turinawe, who has spent some time in the last half-a-decade with coaching stints in Kenya and on the sub-continent in Nepal, Sri Lanka and India, had that cluster at the Starfield Tourney in Nairobi three years ago.

The Baby Cricket Cranes passed the qualifying exam with flying colours despite going down to Namibia in the opener.

“The bowling is our strength but we have worked on simulations that can strengthen the batting. Batting abilities of every player have been put to test in the preparation,” added Turinawe.

Uganda competed at Bangladesh 2004 and Sri Lanka 2006 editions, and after seven failed attempts to reach the global stage again, it was Thawi and Turinawe – two youthful coaches – that ended the hoodoo.

The onus is going to be on the two coaches of contrasting styles to ensure the nation dreams on.

UGANDA’S CONTINGENT TO THE WORLD CUP

PLAYERS: Pascal Murungi (Captain), Juma Miyagi, Brian Asaba, Cyrus Kakuru, Ronald Omara, Ronald Lutaaya, Joseph Baguma, Christopher Kidega, Matthew Musinguzi, Ismail Munir (Assistant Captain), Ackram Nsubuga, Pius Oloka, Ronald Opio, Edwin Nuwagaba, Isaac Sanyu Ategeka.

OFFICIALS: Ivan Thawithemwira (Head Coach), Robinson Turinawe (Assistant Coach), Habib Kulusum Anguyo (Physiotherapist), Sylvester Rokani (Team Manager)

ROAD TO THE CALYPSO WORLD CUP

How Uganda ended 15-year hoodoo to storm third U-19 World Cup

Jinx Broken. After failing to qualify on seven attempts, the Baby Cricket Cranes’ five-year blend of talent under coaches Ivan Thawithemwira and Robinson Turinawe yielded a ticket to the West Indies 2022 ODI Youth Cricket World Cup.

ICC AFRICA MEN’S U-19 WORLD CUP QUALIFIER COLLATED TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Tanzania 51/10 Uganda 54/2 (10.2 overs)
Uganda U19 won by 8 wickets (with 238 balls remaining)

Nigeria 184/10 [163] Namibia 168/8 (23.3 overs)
Namibia U19s won by 6 runs (D/L method)

Uganda 207/9 Nigeria 125/10 (45 overs)
Uganda U19s won by 82 runs (with 30 balls remaining)

Namibia 204/10 Rwanda 93/10 (38.5 overs)
Namibia U19s won by 111 runs

Uganda 311/9 [163] Rwanda 62/4
Uganda U19s won by 100 runs (D/L method)

Tanzania 200/8 Namibia 152 (37.3 overs)
Tanzania U19 won by 48 runs

Rwanda 125/10 Nigeria 121 (39.3 overs)
Rwanda U19s won by 4 runs

Rwanda 118/6 Tanzania 122/6 (32.4 overs)
Tanzania U19s won by 4 wickets (with 20 balls remaining) (D/L method)

Uganda 125/10 [111] (28.3 overs) Namibia 112/3
20/2 (4.3 overs)

Namibia U19s won by 7 wickets (with 80 balls remaining) (D/L method)

One will struggle to find Uganda in the World Cup history books for different team sports. The appearances may be there but they are scanty few for the East African nation.

The She Cranes stand out with three appearances at the Netball World Cup. The Fifa World



World Cups are Rare

And it is really unfortunate that the U20 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) runners-up Hippos missed out on the 2021 edition of FIFA U20 World Cup in Indonesia after it was cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic. But the Pearl of Africa was gifted again this week. Another bunch of teenagers, this time in the gentleman's game, sealed a ticket to the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup due 2022 after winning the qualifying tournament in Rwanda.

The Baby Cricket Cranes will travel to the West Indies next year to compete at the global ICC Youth World Cup for the third time in history. "We thank God who has given us the ability to win this tournament and be able to go to the World Cup," winning coach Ivan Thawithemwira said after his boys celebrated a determinant eight-wicket victory over Tanzania at the Integrated Polytechnic Regional Center (IPRC) oval in Kicukiro.

"Playing at a World Cup rarely happens for a Ugandan player. These boys are so blessed," said Thawi, a former U19 batting all-rounder.

Thawi, Turinawe Special

Uganda last qualified for the ICC U19 World Cup at the Bangladesh 2004 and Sri Lanka 2006 editions under coaches Kenyan Tom Tikolo and Sam Walusimbi respectively. Since then, many other coaches Lawrence Ssematimba, Andrew Meya, Henry Okecho, Davis Turinawe, Francis Otieno and Jackson Ogwang came but all failed to unlock the World Cup dream. So simply, Thawi and his assistant Robinson Turinawe are special. Uganda is believing and hoping that cricket will take a new gear when skipper Pascal Murungi and his counterparts mingle with the next Virat Kohli, Babar Azam, Trent Boult or Josh Hazlewood.

"We deserve a chance to be there so we are also one of the best teams in the world," said Murungi, who was later



named MVP in Kigali after scoring 134 runs in 3 innings and picking five wickets for 38 runs. And the Baby Cricket Cranes this time did not baby sit anyone. They worked to swing the lone ticket into their favour. “The coaching was more tactical,” said Uganda Cricket Association (UCA) selector Richard Okia after watching the tournament in Rwanda.

Team Chemistry

The preparations were relatively better than recently seven failed World Cup attempts. First, the boys had developed team chemistry having played together in different clusters from the U15s level with either Thawi or Robinson. For instance, Murungi is thoroughly bred by Thawi, both of whom shared a captain-coach relationship in the Nyakasura School team during the recent Schools Cricket Week tourney.

Further, Juma Miyaji, Ismail Munir, Ronald Lutaaya, Ronald Omara and Ronald Opio played under Robinson in an U-15s team at the Starfield Tourney in Nairobi, Kenya in 2018. Contrary to recent teams captained by Kenneth Waiswa and Frank Akankwasa, that had not been a significant case. “Undoubtedly, having team chemistry early strengthened the team,” says former U19 wicket-keeper Denis Musali, who played both World Cup tournaments in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

“Those days, we had been together from U15 level. So we played together for the U15, U17 before we got to the national team. We played a lot of International cricket as juniors.

“We would play against Kenya and Tanzania every December holiday but the events were funded by ICC and when they stopped, they also died a natural death,” adds Musali who played in a 213-run defeat to England that had captain Sir Alaistar Cook who was in company of Ravi Bopara, Tim Bresnan and Liam Plunkett in Bangladesh.

Solid Preparations

Fast-forward before Kigali, UCA had had the boys in a five-month preparations, by capitalizing on some of the gaps brought by the ramifications of Covid-19.



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And we wanted to just go back to the basics of the game but also to dissect them in detail and then go over until we find the perfect way to do it.

Baby Cricket Cranes Head Coach
Thawithemwira Ivan

Therein, UCA invited Nigeria's Kaduna State last month which whitewashed the Baby Cricket Cranes in a three-match series but there were lessons learnt and some combinations moulded. "UCA made sure that players were well facilitated for training. UCA also brought in Kaduna State to give the boys exposure. There was also a camp that was organised just before the tournament," noted Okia.

That will partly explain how Murungi and co managed to recover from an opening seven-wicket loss to Namibia in Kicukiro on September 30. They responded bravely with a 100-run win via Duckworth & Lewis (D/L) Method against Rwanda before returning to the Gahanga International Stadium to beat Nigeria by 82 runs. In both victories, the batsmen delivered and the bowlers sealed off the contests.

Epic recovery, Rare Ton

Against Rwanda, Cyrus Kakuru hit 11 boundaries for a century of 116 runs off 102 balls and shared 152 runs for the fifth wicket with Murungi (66 runs off 68 balls) before setting 311-9, the tournament's biggest batting total. Such scores are hard to come by for a country often undone by a persistent batting Achilles heel. "They have a lot of belief in themselves," UCA CEO Martin Ondeko said of the triumphant lot.

Against Nigeria, off-break Joseph Baguma who emerged as tournament's best bowler, picked 5/22 to take wheels off the West African car which was in pursuit of a target of 208 runs. "The basic disciplines are what we focused on and the boys executed them well. We had to repeat systems, certain formulas that we thought would bring us victory," states Thawi, who played for the U19s in 2001.

"And we wanted to just go back to the basics of the game but also to dissect them in detail and then go over until we find the perfect way to do it." After beating Nigeria, Uganda had resurrected its Net Run Rate (NRR), equivalent of goal difference in football, to 1.292 and by facing unbeaten Tanzania in the final on Wednesday, they knew they had to usurp their NRR (1.560).

Lucky Charm

Sensing the state of the turning wicket in Kicukiro, Murungi was lucky enough to win the toss and smartly asked the East African neighbours to bat first. "Fortune was with us this time around. They are good but luck was also in their favour," Musali further says. They then made a meal of them, Murungi backing his decision with stellar figures of 4/9 in 23 deliveries before bowling out the Tanzanians for 51 runs in 26.5 overs.

Then they needed to chase the target within 12 overs to beat Tanzania's NRR and, Opio (16 off 18) and Isaac Ategeka (28*-run-a-ball) did so inside 62 balls to spark off celebrations across the Uganda cricket fraternity. Ondeko is also a former U19 player and actually made the team for Sri Lanka. There, he struck an unbeaten innings of 99 runs off 148 balls to guide Uganda to a five-wicket victory over Canada.

Caribbean, Uganda Comes

He was team manager for the Baby Cricket Cranes in 2017 where they tied with hosts Kenya on points and later lost the New Zealand 2018 ticket via NRR, he opted to resign. By virtue of his current position, Ondeko made it to Kigali and his smile couldn't stop once Ategeka smashed the last two balls to the rope. "Just like 2017, good plan execution, belief by players and management. Good preparations, good team vibe," Ondeko briefly said moments after hugging Thawi whilst surrounded by the players.

Whereas there will be some work to do, it is a sweet achievement for Thawi who's crazy about the West Indies' players like Chris Gayle, Kieron Pollard, Dwayne Bravo and the legendary Brian Lara. "It is a dream come true but also, it's an opening that our country can capitalize on, being in a place like that where cricket history is so rich," says Thawi who, at 39, still harbours dreams of continuing to play for the senior Cricket Cranes.

"We can be exposed to so many things; Caribbean Premier League, different opportunities can come up for sure. Many dreams and many ambitions and desires will be achieved," he added.

Caribbean, Uganda is coming!

2021 ICC AFRICA MEN'S U-19 WORLD CUP QUALIFIER FINAL TABLE STANDINGS

Teams	M	W	L	T	N/R	PT	NRR
Uganda	4	3	1	0	0	6	2.128
Namibia	4	3	1	0	0	6	0.817
Tanzania	4	3	1	0	0	6	0.381
Rwanda	4	1	3	0	0	2	-1.428
Nigeria	4	0	4	0	0	0	-1.414

MAN OF SERIES

Pascal Murungi (Uganda) 134 runs in 3 innings, 5 wickets for 38 runs

MOST RUNS

Cyrus Kakuru (Uganda) 161 runs in 3 innings

Ramon Wilmot (Namibia) 151 in 4 inns

Jan Balt (Namibia) 140 runs in 4 inns

Pascal Murungi (Uganda) 134 runs in 3 inns

Didier Ndikubwimana (Rwanda) 100 runs in 4 inns

MOST WICKETS

Joseph Baguma (Uganda) 10 wickets for 61 runs

Yalinde Nkanya (Tanzania) 10 wickets for 82 runs

Ramon Wilmot (Namibia) 8 wickets for 64 runs

Ridwan Abdulkareem (Nigeria) 7 wickets 89 runs

Jan Coenraad Balt (Namibia) 7 wickets for 95 runs

MOST DISMISSALS

Didier Ndikubwimana (Rwanda) 6 dismissals

MOST CATCHES

Jan Coenraad Balt (Namibia) 5 catches

Dirk Theunissen (Namibia) 4 catches

Christian Benihirwe (Rwanda) 4 catches

Boniface Oche (Nigeria) 4 catches

Karim Kiseto (Tanzania) 4 catches

ICC U19 ODI CRICKET WORLD CUP

UGANDA'S APPEARANCES

2004 Bangladesh: 14th

2006 Sri Lanka: 14th

2022 West Indies: TBC

UGANDA'S WINNING CONTINGENT IN RWANDA

PLAYERS: Pascal Murungi (Captain), Juma Miyagi, Brian Asaba, Cyrus Kakuru, Ronald Omara, Ronald Lutaaya, Joseph Baguma, Christopher Kidega, Matthew Musinguzi, Ismail Munir (Assistant Captain), Ackram Nsubuga, Pius Oloka, Ronald Opio, Isaac Sanyu Ategeka.

OFFICIALS: Ivan Thawithemwira (Head Coach), Robinson Turinawe (Assistant Coach), Habib Kulusum Anguyo (Physiotherapist), Sylvester Rokani (Team Manager)





SNEAK PEEK INTO NATIONAL WOMEN'S CRICKET TEAM

Victoria Pearls Ready to Take On World

In 2017, Uganda's senior women's national cricket team – then codenamed Lady Cricket Cranes - shocked overwhelming favourites - Zimbabwe in the final of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Africa T20 World Cup Qualifiers by 4 wickets to win a last over thriller and earn an opportunity to play at the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Global Qualifiers in Netherlands 2018.

This was the highest peak hit by the ladies since they started playing international cricket in 2001. The women's team has been rebranded as per the demands of the ever-evolving game and from being called the Lady Cricket Cranes, the team now goes by the moniker – Victoria Pearls.

The new local identity – Victoria Pearls - comes from local relatable features that should allow the local fans to follow and support the ladies on international engagements. In simpler relation to Uganda being the Pearl of Africa" and "Lake Victoria" which is the world's largest tropical freshwater lake.

Over 2,000 girls play cricket in Uganda and the ambition for each one of them is to play for the Victoria Pearls. The last two years of the Covid-19 pandemic have slowed down the progress of the Victoria Pearls as missed out on the annual regional meet - The Kwibuka

Women's T20 Tournament - due to a return of several positive cases in the team's camp. At the last Kwibuka appearance for the Victoria Pearls, Proscovia Alako (116) and Rita Musamali (103 not out) put on a 227-run second-wicket partnership in a record team total of 321 against Mali in 2018.

The only international engagement for the ladies in the last two years was the trip to Gaborone Botswana for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Africa Qualifiers and an average performance saw the ladies meekly finish fourth out of 11 teams.

The future for the Victoria Pearls looks very bright with a side beaming with a lot of new exciting talent and a great blend of experience. Uganda ladies will rise again, as anyone who knows anything about African Associate cricket will be aware.

When the players next step out to take guard for their country's and own reputations, they will hopefully have a fully integrated background support system – as was so vividly exhibited in the recent UCA T20 Elite League. It set the right tone and hopefully it will be onwards and upwards.

A big 2022 awaits the Victoria Pearls as they look to improve on their current 18th place ranking in the world. The girls cannot wait to have some fun!

THE FIRST CUT

Sweet memories of Uganda's debut at a Cricket World Cup

Announcing their Arrival. Uganda cricket had their first taste

of World Cup action via two players; Sam Walusimbi and John Nagenda in 1975. But it was their U-19 Boys side that gave them the first proper feeling at the 2004 event. Cricket is one of the disciplines in Uganda that has had many heartbreaks yet few fond memories. The sweet side is highlighted by the senior men's national team triumph at the inaugural ICC (International Cricket Council) World Cricket League (WCL) Division III success in 2007 in Darwin, Australia.

Another feat in almost equal measure came last November when the Cricket Cranes won the first round of the ICC World Cup Challenge League (WCCL) B in Muscat, Oman.

A Rare World Cup

But Uganda's history at World Cup tournaments for team sports is scanty. In cricket, it is even tougher to play at such an event owing to the structure set up by ICC.

The bigger cake at the Twenty20 or 50-Over World Cup is first shared by the 12 ICC Full One Day International (ODI) Members before Associate Nations like Uganda take a share.

It is why the East African nation will hold in high regard its two appearances at the ICC Under-19 World Cup.

The 2004 edition played in Bangladesh was Uganda's bow and perhaps, one of those golden moments for the gentleman's game.



"It was a good experience for all of us and we are lucky we had the opportunity," Clive Kyangungu recalls. He was team captain and the teenagers were under the guise of Kenyan coach Tom Tikolo.



It was a rare experience in the lives of this group. "The whole experience was surreal," says Denis Musali who was one of the team's three wicket-keepers. The main gloves man was Michael Wambudhe Kintu while Fred Isabirye kept for one match of the six.

"We spent about a month in camp in Lugogo before travelling to India for two weeks and connecting to Bangladesh." This happened in December, 2003 into early 2004. Uganda won just one match, actually its last, a five-wicket victory over Canada which ensured it finished 14th out of 16 teams.

Pricey Uganda Flag

But it could have been better only if the pre-tournament trip to India had delivered desired results. "The Indian experience was not a very good one," Musali states.

"We were based in Chandigarh which was very cold and we failed to win any of the warm-up games. The food was also strange plus it would get dark by 4pm and sunrise by 4am. Everything was against us in India."

"Acclimatization during the Monsoon period was also a problem. We spent a lot of time in the hotel instead of the pitch. The weather was terrible and mentally, it was not good for us to get in the zone," Kyangungu, currently working as an aircraft engineer in the Middle East, remembers.

When the team landed in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka, it was received warmly. "We attended one of the best opening ceremonies I ever saw.

Since it was the first time for Uganda, they had challenges finding our flag. The flag they got had a weird looking crested crane and thank God we had carried our own to save the day," Musali memoirs.

Kyangungu and assistant captain Hamza Saleh attended the customary tournament captains' meeting before the first ball. "Standing shoulder to shoulder with other captains from Test playing nations knowing I am representing my country was the proudest day of my life personally," Kyangungu adds.

On February 15, 2004, Uganda's youngsters played their first match against South Africa where they were bowled out for 125 runs in 48.4 overs before losing by eight wickets at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

The opponents had future Proteas like Vernon Philander, Divan van Wyk, Craig Alexander and Andrew Birch. Saleh had top-scored for Uganda with 26 runs off 34 balls while Kyangungu was the only bowler to take a wicket. "We had a good set of players," Kyangungu acknowledges.

And rightly so, that group has been part of the Cricket Cranes' set-up for the last 16 years, albeit lulls therein and a few names hanging on like Daniel Ruyange and Emmanuel Isaneez.

Facing Sir Alastair Cook

"Different characters in the team and everyone brought something special to the team. We failed at the first hurdle though. After qualifying for the tournament in Namibia (October 2003), we immediately switched off."

"But whenever we took to the field, we played like we knew it wasn't for our schools or clubs but our country," said Kyangungu who had just left Ndejje Secondary School.

The biggest game for the side was on February 16 against England at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong the following day. England was led by captain Sir Alastair Cook who was in company of Ravi Bopara, Tim Bresnan and Liam Plunkett, who won the ODI World Cup last year.

Kyangungu beat Cook to the toss, asking them to bat first. Raymond Otim, who would later stay in New Zealand after the 2014 World Cup Qualifier, caught Cook at covers for 27-run-a-ball.

And even if Davis Karashani picked 3/53, England set 259-7 thanks to Luke Wright's 111-ball 70. Uganda was bowled out for 46 runs with only Ronald Ssemenda hitting double digits.

"Facing the England bowling attack will stand out. Like nothing we had faced before. It was like a turkey shoot," Kyangungu narrates. The third group game against Nepal had Uganda mathematically out of the Cup chase but Tikolo's charges showed fighting character.

The third group game against Nepal had Uganda mathematically out of the Cup chase but Tikolo's charges showed fighting character.

Opener Wambudhe made 46 off 95, Musali hit 32 off 75 at number three. Saleh, Karashani and Otim each posted 20 runs for Uganda to set 194 runs.

But the Nepalese who had today's star man Paras Khadka stole it with their captain Shakti Gauchan hitting an unbeaten 80 off 126 balls to win by five wickets with 11 balls remaining. Ssemenda had picked 2/26.

"We were in awe of Test playing nations such as England. But when we came against Canada and Nepal, we had our tails up and knew we had a chance against teams we considered our equals." Kyangungu says.

"Those games we fought until the end because we believed in ourselves as players and as a team. Against the Test nations, we were beaten before we even boarded the bus to the ground."

Uganda dropped to the Plate Cup and were grouped with hosts Bangladesh, Ireland and Canada.

On February 23, Uganda couldn't stop the Irish batting blades. They conceded a 129-ball 117 century by Eoin Morgan and another 70 runs by Kevin O'Brien as Ireland set 329-9.

Morgan would later change to play for England and was the captain as they lifted the elusive ODI World Cup trophy in 2019. Uganda was brave enough to chase 206 runs in 45.2 overs with Karashani making 42 runs while Saleh scored 40.

Individual Accolades

Two days later, the fifth match against the hosts Bangladesh

had Uganda fold meekly, bowled out for 78 runs in 33.3 overs. But the lads fought again, this time Isaneez dishing out fiery medium pace enroute to worthy figures of 6/37 and two maidens in a 9.5-over spell.

The Bengali however won by four wickets with 181 balls left. Uganda's consolation was that Isaneez was adjudged Man of Match for his disciplined and economical spell.

In the final group match against Canada, Uganda's persistence was rewarded with a win on February 27.

The Canadians set 231 but when Kintu went for a duck on the third ball, his fellow opener, Martin Ondeko, present day Uganda Cricket Association (CEO), conjured nine boundaries to produce an unbeaten half-ton of 99 runs off 148 balls in 185 minutes.

That was Uganda's second MOM accolade in as many days and it put a smile on the faces of many back home. Saleh, too, hit a half-century off 67 balls and there had been 41 extras to give the boys a respectable finish to the ride in Asia.

"Ondeko failing to get to 100 broke our hearts. Fighting and fielding with pride against Ireland made us proud even though we lost, it reminded us of our strongest cricket discipline," Kyangungu notes.

"The solace for us was beating Canada. The whole experience was amazing and eye opening.

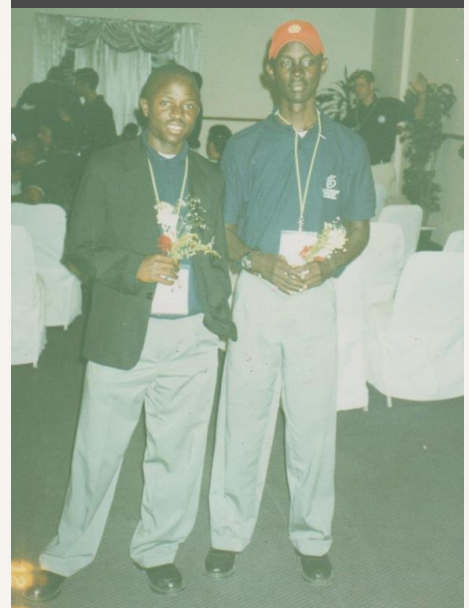
Today, we see the guys we played against playing Test cricket," Musali adds.

Then, Dinesh Karthik was India's skipper and he led tournament's best player Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma, Suresh Raina and Robin Uthappa. Eventual finalists West Indies had Ravi Rampaul and Dinesh Ramdin. Australia had Tim Paine and Moises Henriques.

Captain's Woes

Meanwhile, Kyangungu had spent the whole tournament facing the heat from the international press. "As a captain, I was very unprepared. I hadn't had any media training, I was thrown in the deep end and this just further played on my confidence as reporters were eating me for breakfast after every game."

Uganda returned to the tournament two years later in Colombo, Sri Lanka but the route to that global stage got harder and the country has never returned.





MATCHES & RESULTS UGANDA U-19s SCORECARDS

Feb 15, 2004:
Uganda 125/10 South Africa 126/2
(South Africa won by 8 wickets)

Feb 16, 2004:
England 259/7 Uganda 46/10
(England won by 213 runs)

Feb 19, 2004:
Uganda 194/10 Nepal 195/5
(Nepal won by 5 wickets)

Feb 23, 2004:
Ireland 329/9 Uganda 206/10
(Ireland won by 123 runs)

Feb 25, 2004:
Uganda 78/10 Bangladesh 79/6
(Bangladesh won by 4 wickets)

Feb 27, 2004:
Canada 231/10 Uganda 235/5
(Uganda won by 5 wickets)

STATISTICS CORNER TOP FIVE RUNS GETTERS

1. Hamza Saleh
(157 runs in 6 innings)
2. Martin Odeko
(117 runs in 4 innings)
3. Davis Karashani
(104 runs in 6 innings)
4. Michael Kintu
(76 runs in 5 innings)
5. Raymond Otim
(70 runs in 6 innings)

TOP SIX WICKET TAKERS

1. Emmanuel Isaneez
(9 wickets)
2. Patrick Ochan
(6 wickets)
3. Davis Karashani
(4 wickets)
4. Ronald Ssemenda
(3 wickets)
5. Jimmy Okello
(3 wickets)
6. Hamza Saleh
(3 wickets)

Uganda Squad at 2004 World Cup in Bangladesh

Clive Kyangungu Bigirwa (captain), Michael Kintu Wambudhe, Martin Odeko, Denis Musali, Hamza Almuzahim Saleh, Davis Arinaitwe Karashani, Arthur Kyobe
Raymond Otim, Patrick Ochan, Jimmy Okello, Fred Isabirye, Ronald Ssemenda, Emmanuel Isaneez
Coach: Tom Jones Tikolo

Uganda Squad at 2006 World Cup in Bangladesh

Hamza Almuzahim Saleh (captain), Davis Arinaitwe Karashani, Emmanuel Isaneez, Arthur Solomon Kyobe, Roger Mukasa Galiwango, Denis Arthur Musali, Emmanuel Nakaana, Patrick Ochan, Jimmy Okello, Raymond Otim, Daniel Ruyange, Mouneek Solanki, Ronald Ssemenda, Charles Waiswa.
Coach: Sam Walusimbi.

SNEAK PEEK INTO NATIONAL MEN'S SIDE

Cricket Cranes Want To 'Bamba' With Big Boys

Season of Highs. The Cricket Cranes won two ICC T20 tournaments to qualify for the ICC T20 World Cup Global Qualifier in Zimbabwe 2022. The national team is also atop the log in the race to the 2023 ODI ICC World Cup in India.

MILESTONES IN 2021

Senior Men's Team (Cricket Cranes):

African Champions and Going to 2022 T20 WC in Oman/Zimbabwe

Senior Men's Team (Cricket Cranes):

16 wins (second in T20Is in the world)

MVP at ICC Africa T20 Finals

Riazat Ali Shah of Uganda (106 runs, 8 wickets & 4 catches)

Not all that glitters is gold, so goes the old English adage. But at Uganda Cricket Association (UCA). There is lots of gold dust littered at every corner, it is easy to conclude that the right strides are being made by the Gentleman's Game local body.

Things, though, haven't been too bad either in the aftermath of sports exorcising the demons of the Covid-19 pandemic. 2021 in particular has proved to be some year for Ugandan sporting outfits with a handful of them earning recognition across the divide.

In the space of two months; October and November 2021, Uganda cricket was heaving with optimism, in part because of renewed passion from the players and a new young generation that is intent on scripting its own fairytale stories.



Primary Wish Is ODI

For the Cricket Cranes, who are seated atop the ICC Cricket World Challenge League B after a flawless return in December 2019 with 10 points, and only last week were crowned African champions in the Twenty20 Arena, a whole lot of cricket to be played lies in store.

The dream for coach Laurence Mahatlane is to gain One-Day International (ODI) status by the end of 2022 - thus Uganda being able to hold its own in the 50-over code. The recent triumphs in the much-fancied T20 arena have earned Uganda a chance to go back to the ICC Global Qualifier for the first time since 2013 Abu Dhabi and Mahatlane says the Cricket Cranes will not be mere tourists.

2022 is going to be action packed and hopefully the Cricket Cranes can earn their 'permanent' spot at the table of men.





FACTS CORNER

ICC UNDER-19 CRICKET WORLD CUP DETAILS

Dates: Jan 7 - Feb 6, 2022
Administrator: International Cricket Council (ICC)
Cricket format: 50 overs
Tournament format(s): Round-robin and knockout
Host(s): West Indies
Participants: 16

TOURNAMENT GROUPS

A: Bangladesh, England, Canada, UAE
B: India, South Africa, Ireland, Uganda
C: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, PNG
D: West Indies, Australia, Sri Lanka, TBC

UGANDA'S FIXTURES WARM-UPS

Jan 10: TBC vs. Uganda, Everest (Guyana)

GROUP B MATCHES

Jan 15: Ireland vs. Uganda, Everest
Jan 18: South Africa vs. Uganda, Queen's Park Oval (T&T)
Jan 22: India vs. Uganda, Brian Lara Ground (T&T)

BABY CRICKET CRANES SQUAD TO WORLD CUP

Pascal Murungi (Captain), Ismail Munir (Vice-Captain), Akram Nsubuga, Christopher Kidega, Pius Oloka, Joseph Baguma, Matthew Musinguzi, Ronald Omara, Cyrus Kakuru, Brian Asaba, Isaac Sanyu Ategeka, Ronald Opio, Ronald Lutaaya, Edwin Nuwagaba, Juma Miyagi

OFFICIALS:

Ivan Thawithemwira (Head Coach), Robinson Turinawe (Assistant Coach), Habib Kulusum Anguyo (Physiotherapist), Sylvester Rokani (Team Manager)

PLAYERS & OFFICIALS' PROFILES



OPIO RONALD

Date of Birth: 17/12/2002

Style: Batter

Shirt Number: 89

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: Jason Roy

Home Town: Gulu



OLOKA PIUS

Date of Birth: 11/05/2005

Style: Bowling All Rounder

Shirt Number: 58

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: Andre Russel

Home Town: Jinja



KAKURU CYRUS

Date of Birth: 09/06/2003

Style: Wicketkeeper/Batter

Shirt Number: 24

Dream Destination: England

Role Model: Ben Stokes

Home Town: Kampala



ASIIMWE MUHAMMAD

Date of Birth: 27/12/2005

Style: Wicketkeeper/Batter

Shirt Number: 74

Dream Destination: America

Role Model: MS Dhoni

Home Town: Kampala



ASABA BRIAN

Date of Birth: 10/09/2004

Style: Batter

Shirt Number: 17

Dream Destination: India

Role Model: Virat Kohli

Home Town: Fort Portal



LUTAAYA RONALD

Date of Birth: 15/03/2003

Style: Batter

Shirt Number: 99

Dream Destination: Australia

Role Model: Sourav Ganguly

Home Town: Kampala



MIYAGI JUMA

Date of Birth: 04/05/2003

Style: Bowling All Rounder

Shirt Number: 57

Dream Destination: England

Role Model: Jofra Archer

Home Town: Kampala



MUSA MAJID

Date of Birth: 12/11/2005

Style: Bowling All Rounder

Shirt Number: 50

Dream Destination: Australia

Role Model: Mitchel Starc

Home Town: Kampala



MUSINGUZI MATTHEW

Date of Birth: 11/11/2004

Style: Left Arm Spinner

Shirt Number: 8

Dream Destination: England

Role Model: Ravindra Jadeja

Home Town: Fort Portal



ATEGEKA ISAAC

Date of Birth: 11/02/2004

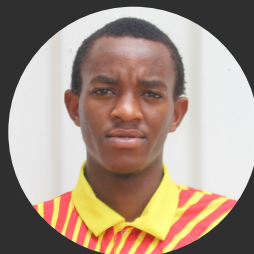
Style: Batter

Shirt Number: 54

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: Shiv Chanderpaul

Home Town: Fort Portal



EDWIN NUWAGABA

Date of Birth: 20/01/2004

Style: Bowling All Rounder

Shirt Number: 23

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: AB Devillers

Home Town: Kampala



BAGUMA JOSEPH

Date of Birth: 08/04/2005

Style: Bowling All Rounder

Shirt Number: 22

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: Joe Root

Home Town: Fort Portal



MUNIR ISMAIL

Date of Birth: 31/12/2005

Style: Batting All Rounder

Shirt Number: 73

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: Steve Smith

Home Town: Naguru



MURUNGI PASCAL

Date of Birth: 06/03/2004

Style: Bowling All Rounder

Shirt Number: 59

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: Ben Stokes

Home Town: Fort Portal



KIDEGA CHRISTOPHER

Date of Birth: 29/10/2006

Style: Bowling All Rounder

Shirt Number: 66

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: Sam Curran

Home Town: Gulu



OCHAYA JAFFER

Date of Birth: 31/08/2004

Style: Bowling All Rounder

Shirt Number: 20

Dream Destination: England

Role Model: Ravichandran Ashwin

Home Town: Kampala



OMARA RONALD

Date of Birth: 23/05/2005

Style: Wicketkeeper/Batter

Shirt Number: 87

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: Jonny Bairstow

Home Town: Kampala



NSUBUGA AKRAM

Date of Birth: 25/08/2004

Style: Bowler

Shirt Number: 69

Dream Destination: Jamaica

Role Model: Wasim Akram

Home Town: Kampala



YUNUSI SOWOBI

Date of Birth: 20/11/2005

Style: Bowler

Shirt Number: 72

Dream Destination: Canada

Role Model: Pat Cummings

Home Town: Kampala



FAHAD MUTAGANA

Date of Birth: 15/12/2004

Style: Batter

Shirt Number: 18

Dream Destination: England

Role Model: Babar Azam

Home Town: Kampala



THAWITHEMWIRA IVAN

Head Coach



TURINAWA ROBINSON

Assistant Coach



SYLVESTER ROKANI

Team Manager



HABIBA KULUSUM ANGUYO

Team Physiotherapist

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