

THE VISITING 'stars' of the South African Breweries' soccer tour may have walked away with R50,000 each but the trophy went to those who did not put a soccer boot on the field.

First up on the winners' rostrum were the teams who refused to play those community organisations who organised the move against the tour. SAB — Orlando Pirates, Moroka Swallows and Kaizer Chiefs. Standing with them to a world ovation were the soccer supporters who boycotted the matches as well as those community organisations who organised the move against the tour.

Also plumbing for performers' medals were sportspeople of a different kind, in a sport inspired by the success of the anti-tour moves. These are, of course, the verbal gymnasts — found mainly in the commercial press — who twisted and turned, kicked and screamed, and leapt up, down and sideways to prove that 'pressure' and 'threat' stopped the Big Three soccer teams from playing.

The decision to refuse to play was not a result of 'bowing to political pressure' by the teams but rather of their co-operation with the organisations opposing the tour. The teams responded, according to a joint statement released by the anti-tour organisations, to 'the practicalities of the situation in South Africa', and were hailed 'for choosing to be on the side of the oppressed people.'

The Soweto Security Police, it seems, was not convinced that free choice was involved and has launched an investigation into 'possible intimidation'. Officials from the three teams, the National Professional Soccer League and the South African National Football Association were called to Protea police station to answer questions.

All three managers of the teams have clearly put their reasons for the boycott, overruling the speculation of 'political pressure'. Kaiser Moutaung of Chiefs said boycotting the tour was 'in the nations interests', and Swallows chairperson David Chabedi said it 'would have been suicidal' to go against the wishes of the people.

'The club management had not realised the extent of the opposition and anti-tour groups had convinced them it would be in the best interests of the community to pull out', said Chabedi.

He said opposition had also come from the clubs' supporters.

The success of the campaign, according to a statement released by the anti-tour organisations, indicates the need for unity and a strong broad front. The campaign was 'a radical departure from the traditional go-it-alone approach which has been adopted by some organisations in the past.'

'By simply issuing press statements and not allowing mass participation — as is being done with the boycott of international music starts who tour South Africa — such campaigns have failed.'

At the centre of the anti-tour thrust were the Congress of South African Students, the Azanian Students' Organisation, the General and Allied Workers Union, the Teachers Action Committee, the Committee of Ten, the South African Council of Churches, the Azanian People's Organisation, the Detainees' Aid Movement, the Workers Support Committee, the Municipal and General Workers Union and Civic Associations of Soweto.

Sacos also opposed the tour.

This is not to forget the role played by the soccer supporters of Soweto. At Orlando Stadium, on the day Amazulu played the SAB XI, people supporting the stand taken by the three teams stood outside chanting 'Go home, go home'. Apparently they had not

# Match of the year: The game that never kicked off

*The winners of the international soccer boycott: the three teams who refused to play, the supporters who stayed away and the community groups who organised against the tour.*



Thousands of fans usually turn up for soccer games. But at the Amazulu-



Chiefs' manager Kaiser Moutaung — 'The boycott is in the nation's interests'

swallowed the SABC and commercial press' line that there is no link between politics and sport.

The 'big story' in the press has become the world title fight, the rugby tour, the soccer tour, the cricket tour. High-powered delegations have stepped up lobbying for readmission to the international scene on the basis that their particular sport is now 'completely multi-racial'. SA's case has been strengthened by favourable reports from the very many overseas officials who have been brought (or is it bought?) out here, shown around, and persuaded to add their voice to the call for an end to the international boycott.

Government money, funnelled into sport through Info Department fronts like the *Citizen* newspaper, has been replaced by a sudden, massive injection of private capital, largely from SA Breweries, its subsidiaries Southern Sun and Sales House and the Sigma Motor Corporation.

Dr Danie Craven, president of the SA Rugby Board, put his finger on it when he said SA would 'buy' its way back into world sport.

SA Breweries, the major sponsor of rugby, cricket and soccer has found itself able to underwrite a cricket tour to the tune of R2m; a soccer tour for a similar amount in the same years; and there is talk now



Jimmy Hill . . . an organiser of the SAB Internationals. In 1976 Saudi Arabia's Prince Faisal gave him £25 million to promote soccer in the oil-rich state

of another R2m cricket tour featuring a West Indies team for the summer.

Not all the money has been spent, but these are amounts unheard of in world cricket and soccer. Players have been paid astronomical sums to break international bans on sporting contact with SA. A major aim of these tours has been to demonstrate to the world that SA sport is 'completely multi-racial' and so hasten the country's return to the international fold.

Thus it was interesting, to say the least, to see SA Breweries and the Football Council cut short the football tour because 'there are feelings against the tour among some sections of our black supporters'.

What persuaded Breweries and the Football Council that these feelings were worth listening to? After all, they were there before the tour began. Breweries and the Council know perfectly well that most people support the international sporting boycott.

Perhaps it was because a mere three thousand people turned up to watch the Amazulu-SAB match. Many more than that may have gone to the meeting that was to take place between Pirates and their supporters. A day before the anti-tour meeting was to be held, however, the tour was aborted.



SAB's Peter Savory. The company sponsored the tour to the tune of R1.7 million.

with the community on the tour at all. Perhaps if they had they would not have ended up wasting about R50,000 per player, or, put another the profits made on about 2.5 million beers.

When the day was done SAB would have had to put up R73,000, the rest of the costs coming from gate money. The community would have paid for the tour. And what is R73,000 when SAB is set to make a profit of R1.715 million this year anyway?

'Our hope is that we have helped football, that we can contribute to the development of the game, that spectators will thrill to the joys of seeing some of the great players of the age', said Savory before the tour was called off.

What did Kaiser Moutaung have to say about that besides labelling the tour a 'rip-off'.

'Some of the players in the touring side looked like wrestler more than anything else. They were obviously not match fit and no better than the current crop the country can offer'. The SAB XI would not have helped soccer in any way, he said, and the money would have been better spent at club level.

George Thabe for the FCSA said there were four considerations for the tour:

- It would be in the best interest of local soccer.

Undoubtedly the two most important reasons are that the community organisations formed a united front and that, for the first time, major clubs of one of the most powerful sporting bodies have come out on the side of the oppressed community and the international sporting boycott.

The Big Three have now been invited to join the Sacos affiliated SA Soccer Federation. Their stand, said the SASF, would 'go down in history'.

The clubs may be some way from joining the Federation. There is no money in the Sacos leagues, while Breweries, Mainstay, Datsun and others plough more than R500,000 annually into the NPSL.

When SA Breweries put up R1,780,000 for the tour they did so, according to Peter Savory, a senior executive, to help football and the community.

'SAB involves itself in the support of the community because the community supports SAB', said Savory. '90 per cent of the people who support us are followers and players of sport so we put money back to help them.'

It is difficult not to see red at this kind of misguided philanthropy. Apart from the fact that the beer drinkers have no choice but to support SAB as it has the beer monopoly, SAB did not consult

