

Heartbreaks for Rangers' Aribo, Bassey as Eintracht Frankfurt Win Shootouts

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The dream of Nigeria's trio of Calvin Bassey, Joe Aribo and Leon Balogun to lay their hands on the UEFA Europa League trophy crashed last night after former Arsenal player, Aaron Ramsey missed his spot kick in the shootouts that ensued after regulation and extra time deadlocked one-all.

Super Eagles midfielder, Joseph Ayodele-Aribo had fired the Scottish giants into the lead in the 59th minute.

Aribo cashed on a misjudged header from Frankfurt's Djibril Sow and chased defender Tuta in a tangle which allowed the Nigerian international a free run on goal. He didn't strike his shot cleanly but it rolled past the diving Kevin Trapp in goal for the German club.

Some of the over 100,000 Rangers fans inside the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan Stadium and those outside in Seville went wild in celebration of 50 years European Cup jinx about to be broken.

But that was not to be as Frankfurt fought back in the 69th minute as Filip Kostic drilled a cross from the left and Connor Goldson allowed it run by him as Rafael Borre slides in before Bassey could get there.

Borre rammed the ball home from six yards for the equalizer and dragged the game into extra

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time. With no clear winner in sight after 120 minutes of

football showpiece in which Bassey stood out in five-star

performance, the game winner had to be decided in penalty shootouts.

Ramsey's poor kick ruined the night for the Gers who

rightly deserved to have their hands on the trophy to end 50 years wait for another European competition honour. It was indeed heartbreaking as

Rangers' players crumpled to their feet as Frankfurt's bench spewed on to the pitch as they heralded in their own second European trophy.



Eintracht Frankfurt players celebrating winning the 2021/2022 Europa League Cup 5-4 in shootouts after regulation and extra time ended 1-1 in Seville, Spain last night

Mexico Unveil Squad for Nigerian Friendly in the USA

Head Coach of Mexico's senior national team, Gerardo Martino, yesterday released his squad list for the international friendlies against Nigeria, Uruguay and Ecuador in the United States of America.

Martino's 37-man squad have Wolverhampton Wanderers forward Raul Jimenez, experienced goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa, Atletico Madrid's Herera Lopez Miguel and Sevilla midfielder Corona Ruiz Jesus Manuel.

The El Tri, as the Mexicans are known will play Super Eagles in the first friendly at the AT & T Stadium in Dallas, Texas, on May 28 before taking on Uruguay and Ecuador in the two other friendlies.

Eagles are to play Ecuador in a second friendly at the Red Bull Arena, Harrison, on June 2.

The Mexicans are using the friendlies to prepare to take on Suriname and Jamaica in the

Nations League.

The full list of players include; Goalkeepers: Acevado Lopez Carlos, Guillermo Ochoa, Talavera Diaz Alfredo, Cota Rodolfo.

Defenders: Include, Aguirre Germain, Alvarez Nahin, Alvarez Velasquez, Angulo Alberto, Julian Araujo, Araujo Alejandro, Arteaga Daniel, Dominguez Caesar, Gallardo Jesus Daniel, Montes Jasib, Moreno Alfredo, Kings Rosemary Daniel, Sanchez Eduardo, Vazquez Felipe,

Midfielders: Alvarado Fernandez Carlos, Artuna Romero, Beltran Cruz, Chavez Gerrardo, Cordoba Reyes, Corona Jesus Manuel, Guardardo Hernandez, Gutierrez Galadis, Herrera Lopez Miguel, Lainez Leyia Diego, Lira Mendez, Pineda Alvarado, Romo Barron Luis, Sanchez Erick Daniel, Vega Alexis.

Forwards: Raul Jimenez, Flores Marcelo, Gimenez Tomas, Martin Maz, Pizarro Thomas.

Atseye Joins CBN Tennis Q'final Train

Nigeria current tennis top seed, Henry Atseye, has booked his place in the quarter-finals of the on-going 44th CBN Senior Tennis Championship holding at the Moshood Abiola Stadium Abuja when he dispatched Michael Michael, 6-1, 6-4.

Also in the quarter-finals is Igbino Wilson following his 7-5, 6-1 win over Toriola while Ikechukwu Iloputa fought hard enough to earn a 7-6, 6-1 win over Thomas, the former Champion.

Philip Abayomi is also through to the quarter-finals of the men's single category.

In the women's singles category, Oyinlomo Quadre sent out Jeusi

Jesutoyosi packing via a 2-0 win that ended 6-1, 6-1 in favour of Quadre while Ezeh Chidinma lost 6-4, 6-0 to Toyin Asogba.

According to today's quarter-finals pairings, Atseye will lock horns with Gabriel while Iloputa tackles Wilson in some of the quarter-final fixtures in the men's category while high riding MaryLove Edwards faces Oyinlomo Quadre in what has been considered as the battle of the titans. Godgift goes up against Madueke.

Meanwhile, MaryLove said yesterday she expects a tough match today while Quadre also admits "this is tennis where anything can happen."

Team Nigeria to Battle Jamaica, Japan in Group C of Detroit 2022



Super Eagles' Calvin Bassey (left) and other Rangers players consoling Aaron Ramsey after missing the spot kick that denied Rangers winning the Europa League trophy in Seville, Spain yesterday

Team Nigeria has been drawn in Group C alongside Japan and Jamaica at the official draw ceremony for the Special Olympics Unified Cup Detroit 2022 which held last Friday at the Detroit Athletic Club (DAC).

The male 11-a-side unified football tournament, modeled after the FIFA World Cup and presented by Toyota, will begin on the 31st of July in Detroit, USA, with over 300 athletes from 25 countries around the world to compete in Unified Sports.

It brings together athletes with and without intellectual disabilities to play on the same team, demonstrating how playing and competing together breaks down barriers and ultimately creates communities of acceptance and inclusion.

Special Olympics Nigeria athletes are upbeat as they intensify their training in preparation for the game.

Team Nigeria's first group stage match will be against Japan on the 1st of August 2022, followed by a

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match against Jamaica the next day. The Unified Cup is expected to attract 10,000 spectators, 1,000 volunteers, and 500 family members and dignitaries, all with the common goal of breaking down social barriers through the joy of sport and the power of inclusion. Following the inaugural competition in Chicago in 2018, the Special Olympics Unified Cup Detroit 2022 will be the second tournament in this single-sport series.

Special Olympics Nigeria is part of a worldwide movement (Special Olympics International) that is aimed at changing the misconceptions individuals have about people with intellectual disabilities (PWID).

Its mission is to provide various sports training and athletic competitions in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities thus providing a platform where their abilities are celebrated in the society.

Okpeke International 10km Road Race Gets MTN Boost

Telecommunications giant, MTN Nigeria has swelled the growing list of blue chip companies who have identified with the historic, World Athletics Elite Label Okpeke International 10km Road Race.

Race Director, Zack Amodu, confirmed yesterday that MTN, the largest mobile telecommunications operator in Nigeria has affirmed its support for the eighth edition of the race which holds on Saturday May 28, 2022 in Okpeke near Auchi in Edo State.

"We are delighted to have MTN identify with the first World Athletics label road race in West Africa and I think it is only fitting

that we have the largest mobile telecommunications operator in Nigeria supporting an event that has been designated through its label status as one of the leading road races in the world," said Amodu who revealed MTN Nigeria will be supporting the event in many ways including monetary support.

"MTN Nigeria will be offering us monetary and data (hynet flex boxes with active data) support for the race as well as optimising their network in and around Okpeke town.

"The Okpeke Network optimization involves the deployment

of network infrastructures to event areas covering Apama road where the race will be flagged off and Okpeke, the finish point."

This, according to Amodu will promote increased productivity and usability and allow data to be exchanged effectively and efficiently.

The race director also says MTN Nigeria's support also extends to the athletes, officials, spectators and indigenes of Okpeke who will benefit from the special 30% discount on data bundles for Nigerians on their network at the event.

This will be in addition to the

branded t-shirts, umbrellas, wrist bands, pens, notepads and other give aways that will be distributed to spectators at the venue."

"This is a win-win situation for everybody that will be in Okpeke on race day, especially those on the MTN network. Okpeke is the first road running event in West Africa to be granted a World Athletics label status.

"The race is the next major road running event on World Athletics calendar which means the focus of the entire world is now on Okpeke after last Sunday's elite label races across the globe," concludes Amodu.