



# BAFANA'S WAY FORWARD

Although they crashed out in the first round of soccer's greatest stage they showed plenty of promise. Now the dust has settled where do they go from here?

**W**E FELT it, we loved it, we lived it – but now the party is over and the real work begins. There's no time for World Cup hangovers right now because qualifying matches for the 2012 African Cup of Nations start in September and there's much work to be done to get SA's national soccer team ready.

Bafana Bafana made us proud, yet the fact remains they were the first host team ever to be

eliminated in the group matches. If we tackled the problems besetting soccer development in SA we could confidently take on the best of the best at Afcon – and then hit the 2014 World Cup hard, soccer experts say.

"They're not far from sorting things out," says Dan Gaspar, Portugal's assistant coach, who has worked with Bafana. "And when they do, the soccer world better be prepared for a new king."

We spoke to various experts to find out what the national team needs to do next.

## FOUR LESSONS LEARNT AT THE 2010 WORLD CUP

### ■ Plan ahead.

There is an urgent need for a functioning, effectively run soccer academy (see Safa's School of Excellence in a Nutshell). "We need an overhaul of the school soccer system," former Bafana Bafana player George Dearnaley says. "We need better

athletes, better-educated players with technique and strength. This is a process of developing players from eight years old along World Cup standards."

"Look at Spain," says Farouk Khan, former coach of clubs including Santos, Sundowns and Kaizer Chiefs and former youth coach at Safa's School of Excellence. "Fifteen years ago they started to scout for players who could be in the 2010 World Cup team." This way you can identify future players.

## WHAT THE COACHES SAY



■ "When we arrived here people expected us to build a mansion but we didn't have enough bricks and time. We told them we will build what is achievable – not a mansion. But if people work very hard this country has big potential." – **Jairo Leal, Bafana Bafana's assistant coach**



■ "A database of young talented players should be regularly updated. Players with specific characteristics for certain positions should be identified and nurtured until they're ready to join the national team." – **Gavin Hunt, coach of PSL champions SuperSport United**



■ "Look at how rugby evolved: the Blue Bulls have a strong youth development programme and the results are there for all to see. Sports scientists such as Professor Tim Noakes of the Sports Science Institute, University of Johannesburg exercise scientist Riaan Lombard and biokineticist Dr Leon Lategan need to be engaged to share their knowledge." – **Farouk Khan, former coach of Santos FC and youth coach at Safa's School of Excellence**



■ "Upfront, on the field, we need a bit of exploration. It's not all about two strikers. We might have three, because we've seen now a new formation: 4-3-3. Every World Cup brings a new successful formation and 4-3-3 is this tournament's." – **Pitso Mosimane, Bafana manager-elect, speaking to the Mail & Guardian**