

GOVERNOR DOUYE DIRI PRE-SEASON FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT 2024

REPORT

**(GOVERNOR DOUYE DIRI PRE-SEASON TOURNAMENT 2024:
A RESOUNDING SUCCESS)**

GOVERNOR DOUYE DIRI PRE-SEASON FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT: A GLOBAL FOOTBALL FIESTA.

The recently concluded Bayelsa Governor's Football Tournament (Prosperity Cup) and the Governor Douye Diri Pre-season Tournament has transformed Bayelsa into a vibrant hub of football activity, clubs, and coaches from around the nation. The city's hospitality industry has experienced an unprecedented surge, with hotels and restaurants fully booked as the 7 participating teams from the NPFL were lodged for the duration of the tournament. The Tournament has ushered in a new era for Bayelsa football, showcasing the state's potential to host world-class tournaments and solidifying Bayelsa's position as a football powerhouse.

TOURNAMENT OBJECTIVES

Objective:

To organize a high-profile pre-season tournament, featuring six top teams from the Nigerian Professional Football League (NPFL), in honor of His Excellency, Governor Douye Diri, to re-organize our darling team, Bayelsa United and to promote sports development in Bayelsa State.

These include:

- Provide a platform for Bayelsa United to prepare for the upcoming season.
- Provide an avenue to scout for players for Bayelsa United.
- To expose the young talents in Bayelsa State (products of the Bayelsa Governor's Football Tournament aka Prosperity Cup 2024) to other premiership Clubs for scouting.
- Promote football development in Bayelsa State.
- Showcase the state's hospitality and infrastructure.
- Foster partnership and collaboration among stakeholders in the sports industry.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- Identification Sourcing new players for Bayelsa United.
- Prepare Bayelsa United for a more competitive 2024/2025 football year.
- Enhanced sports development in Bayelsa State.
- Increased visibility and reputation for the state.
- Strengthened relationships among participating teams and officials.
- Improved preparedness for the upcoming NPFL season.
- Creating a career path in football for the young players in the state both home and abroad.

TOURNAMENT DETAILS:

Duration: 8 days (11th - 18th August 2024)

Participating Teams: 6 NPFL teams (to be selected based on their performance in the previous season).

Tournament Format: Round-robin league of 2 groups, with the top two teams playing in the final match.

Venue: Samson Siasia Stadium, Yenagoa.

PRIZES:

Though not initially budgeted for, the organizing committee decided that it was very appropriate to give teams the opportunity to win something. Consequently the Hon. Commissioner of Sports graciously approved and supported the tournament with funds to generate the prize money of 3 million Naira(3,000,000.00) which was well received.

Each of the teams received an appearance fee of N500,000.00 each, however Bayelsa United received an appearance fee of N700,000.00.

PARTICIPATING TEAMS:

1. Abia Warriors
2. Akwa United FC
3. Rivers United FC
4. Insurance FC (Bendel Insurance)
5. Kwara United FC
6. Sunshine Stars FC
7. Bayelsa United
8. Crusaders Selected Side

PARTICIPATION AND SELECTION

1. **Primary Objective:** The tournament was principally held to prepare Bayelsa United for the upcoming Premier League season. All plans and decisions were geared towards achieving this objective.

2. **Composition of Crusaders Selected FC:** The team that participated in the Pre-Season tournament was a selected side, comprising 11 players from the last Prosperity Cup including:

- Ogboinbiri United
- Bayelsa United Feeders
- Crusaders Feeders
- Silina FC
- Other teams
- Coached by Crusaders Coach Genesis and the Prosperity Cup Selected Side Coach, Ada Gwegwe.

This team was formed to provide a competitive opponent for Bayelsa United and an opportunity to showcase the youthful talents that abound in Bayelsa State.

The selection process of the team representing Krusaders selected in the Pre-Season tournament was raised and quickly addressed, with clarifications provided regarding the composition of Krusaders Selected FC and the inclusion of Ogboinbiri United players.

Officiating: We received great accolades from clubs, coaches and fans for the officiating which was impressive during the tournament. This was because we identified outstanding referees during the last Prosperity Cup and recommended these officials to the referees council to be used for the tournament.

Overview

The Governor Douye Diri Pre-Season Football Tournament 2024 received extensive media coverage across various platforms, including print, online, and broadcast media. The tournament's profile was elevated through strategic media engagement, ensuring widespread publicity and reach.

Media Reach

- **Print Media:** Featured over 10 national newspapers including (The Guardian, The Punch, Vanguard, ThisDay, and Daily Trust, Daily Assset, Tribune, Daily Independent etc.) and other local newspapers (Bayelsa State-owned newspapers).
- **Online Media:** Covered by 20 online news platforms, Complete Sports, Sports Village Square, and others).
- **Broadcast Media:** The tournament was televised on National Television stations daily (Nigerian Television Authority, (NTA), Africa Independent Television, (AIT), CHANNELS, ARISE TV, DSTV, and 1 local TV station (Bayelsa State-owned TV station), as well as daily coverage from all radio stations in Bayelsa including, FRCN, Glory FM, Rhythm FM, Peoples FM, Raypower FM, Royal FM, Creek FM, Island FM and Hot Fm Abuja.

Media Highlights

- **Pre-tournament press conference:** Attended by 20 journalists from various media outlets.
- **Draws and Pre-tournament meeting** was also covered by the media.
- **Matchday coverage:** Live updates and reports from all 14 matches.
- **Post-match interviews:** Coaches and players from participating teams shared their thoughts and insights.
- **Tournament review:** In-depth analysis and highlights packages aired on TV and published online.

Social Media Engagement

LIVE STREAMING: Was done during all the matches through out the tournament.

- **Official Twitter handle:** @GovDouyeTourny (10,000 followers)
- **Official Facebook page:** @GovDouyeDiriPreSeasonTournament (20,000 likes)
- **Instagram:** @GovDouyeTourny (5,000 followers)

Media Impact

- Estimated reach: Over 40 million people (print, online, and broadcast combined)
- Increased visibility for participating teams and players
- Enhanced reputation for Bayelsa State as a hub for football/sports development
- Projection of Bayelsa State as a peaceful hospitable state.
- Endorsement of the youth empowerment and sports development policies of the prosperity administration of Governor Douye Diri

Recommendations

- Continue engaging with media partners to ensure sustained coverage
- Explore additional media channels (radio, podcasts, etc.) for expanded reach
- Develop a comprehensive media strategy for future tournaments
- Live coverage on National Television of the Final Match.

This report highlights the successful media coverage of the Governor Douye Diri Pre-Season Football Tournament 2024. By leveraging various media platforms, the tournament achieved widespread publicity, promoting the event and showcasing the talents of participating teams and players, as well as the peaceful, calm and hospitable nature of Bayelsa State.

The Pre-Season Tournament, held in Bayelsa State, Nigeria, has come to a close, leaving an indelible mark on the football landscape. The tournament, which featured eight teams from the South-South region, was a thrilling display of skill, sportsmanship, and determination.

MATCHDAY 1 GROUP A: BAYELSA UNITED AND AKWA UNITED EXPERIENCE MIXED FORTUNES

The Governor Douye Diri Pre-Season Tournament kicked off with an exciting Matchday 1, featuring two thrilling encounters. Bayelsa United and Akwa United, two of the tournament's top contenders, experienced mixed fortunes in their opening matches.

Bayelsa United Suffers Narrow Defeat

In the first match of the day, Bayelsa United faced off against Sunshine Stars at the Samson Siasia International Stadium. Despite a spirited performance, Bayelsa United succumbed to a narrow 1-0 defeat. Sunshine Stars' lone goal, scored in the first half, proved to be the difference-maker in a tightly contested encounter. Bayelsa United's inability to find the back of the net despite creating several scoring opportunities ultimately cost them the match.

Akwa United Held to a Draw

In the second match of the day, Akwa United took on Abia Warriors in a highly anticipated clash. The match ended in a 1-1 stalemate, with both teams sharing the spoils. Akwa United's Ezekiel Edidiong opened the scoring in the first half, but Abia Warriors equalized in the second half through a stunning strike. Despite creating several chances, neither team could find the winner, settling for a draw.

MATCHDAY 1: GROUP B WITNESSES CLOSELY CONTESTED ENCOUNTERS

Group B of the Governor Douye Diri Pre-Season Tournament kicked off with two intense matches on Matchday 1, showcasing the competitiveness of the teams involved.

Insurance FC Secures Narrow Victory

In the first match, Krusaders FC faced off against Insurance FC, with the latter emerging victorious with a slim 1-0 margin. The lone goal, scored in the first half, proved to be the difference-maker in a tightly contested encounter. Krusaders FC's inability to find the back of the net despite creating several scoring opportunities ultimately cost them the match. Insurance FC's win sets them up nicely for their next fixture, however, Krusaders Selected gave a good account of themselves in this keenly contested match.

Goalless Stalemate Between Rivers United and Kwara United

The second match of the day saw Rivers United take on Kwara United in a highly anticipated clash. However, the match ended in a goalless stalemate, with neither team able to find the breakthrough. Despite creating several chances, the defenses of both teams held strong, resulting in a share of the spoils. The draw leaves both teams with a point each, setting up an intriguing next round of fixtures.

MATCHDAY 2: TEAMS MAKE THEIR MOVE IN THE GOVERNOR DOUYE DIRI PRE-SEASON TOURNAMENT

Matchday 2 of the Governor Douye Diri Pre-Season Tournament saw teams make their move, with some securing crucial wins and others suffering setbacks. The intensity of the competition was palpable, with every match counting in the quest for glory.

Group A: Bayelsa United Bounce Back, Akwa United Take Control

In Group A, Bayelsa United bounced back from their opening-day defeat with a 2-1 win over Abia Warriors. Goals from Emmanuel Otu and John Bassey secured the three points for Bayelsa United, who now sit second in the group. Abia Warriors' loss leaves them at the bottom of the table.

Akwa United took control of Group A with a 1-0 win over Sunshine Stars. Ezekiel Edidiong's goal proved to be the difference-maker, as Akwa United moved to the top of the group with maximum points.

Group B: Kwara United and Insurance FC Share Spoils

In Group B, Kwara United secured a crucial 1-0 win over Krusaders Selected, moving them up to second in the group. Insurance FC, meanwhile, was held to a 1-1 draw by Rivers United. The result leaves Insurance FC top of the group, but with Kwara United and Rivers United hot on their heels.

MATCHDAY 3: BAYELSA UNITED TAKE CONTROL OF GROUP A, GROUP B REMAINS IN THE HANDS OF INSURANCE FC AND KWARA UNITED WHO FINISHED THE GROUP WITH 5 POINTS EACH

Matchday 3 of the Governor Douye Diri Pre-Season Tournament saw Bayelsa United take control of Group A, while Group B saw Insurance Fc and Kwara Tie in points but Insurance Fc by virtue of Goals for top the group.

Group A: Bayelsa United Top the Table

In Group A, Bayelsa United secured a crucial 1-0 win over Akwa United, moving them to the top of the table. Emmanuel Otu's goal proved to be the difference-maker, as Bayelsa United now sit in pole position to advance to the next stage. Akwa United's loss leaves them second in the group, but still in contention.

Abia Warriors and Sunshine Stars played out a 1-1 draw, a result that does little to enhance their chances of advancing. Both teams now sat at the bottom of the table.

Group B: Krusaders Selected Cause Upset, Kwara United and Insurance FC Share Spoils

In Group B, Krusaders Selected caused an upset with a 1-0 win over Rivers United. The result leaves Rivers United bottom of the table, while Krusaders Selected now sat at the third place position. The superlative display by Krusaders Selected was a great delighted to the excited fans that filled the Samson Siasia Stadium.

Kwara United and Insurance FC played out a goalless draw, a result that does little to separate the two teams. Insurance FC remain top of the group, but Kwara United are now level on Goals For and virtue of Alphabetical Order.

Tournament Reaches Critical Stage

Matchday 3 has set the tone for a thrilling conclusion to the group stages. Teams are now aware of where they stand. With the third place match booked between Akwa United and Kwara United, while Bayelsa United locked horns with Insurance Fc for the Gold in the first place match both scheduled for **Sunday 18th August, 2024**.

3RD PLACE BATTLE: AKWA UNITED EMERGED 2ND RUNNER UP

Akwa United emerged as the 2nd runners up, defeating Kwara United 4-2 on penalties after a 1-1 draw at regulation time.

CHAMPIONS: BAYELSA UNITED

Bayelsa United emerged as the champions, defeating Bendel Insurance 7-6 on penalties after a 1-1 draw at regulation time. This victory was a testament to the team's resilience and preparedness for the upcoming Premier League season. After losing their first game, Bayelsa United showed remarkable resilience and determination, bouncing back with a penalty shootout victory that propelled them to the finals!

The Ladan Bosso-led team demonstrated exceptional capacity and preparedness for the next season, leaving fans and stakeholders in awe of their remarkable transformation!.

TOURNAMENT STATISTICS

- Total Matches Played: 14
- Total Goals Scored: 17
- Average Goals Scored per Match: 1.1
- Goalless Draws: 2 (Rivers United 0-0 Kwara United, Bendel Insurance 0-0 Kwara United)
- Clean Sheets Recorded: 10
- Team with Most Clean Sheets: Kwara United (4 clean sheets)
- Fastest Goal Scored: 2 minutes (Bayelsa United's John Bassey against Abia Warriors)
- Late Goal Recorded: 89th minute (Kwara United Ismael Gatta's goal against Crusaders)
- Team with Most Goals: Bayelsa United (4 goals)
- Team with Most Goals Conceded: Abia Warriors (4 goals)
- Most Frequent Scoreline: 1-0 (recorded in 6 matches)
- Penalty Goals at Regulation Time: 3 (Ezekiel Edidiong, John Bassey, and David Weke)
- Penalty Shootouts: 2 (Akwa United vs Kwara United, Bayelsa United vs Bendel Insurance)

TEAM'S PERFORMANCE

- Bayelsa United: 4 matches, 3 wins, 0 draws, 1 loss, 4 goals scored, 2 goals conceded.
- Bendel Insurance: 4 matches, 1 win, 2 draws, 1 loss, 3 goals scored, 2 goals conceded.
- Kwara United: 4 matches, 1 win, 2 draws, 1 loss, 2 goals scored, 0 goals conceded.

BEST GOALKEEPERS

- Nurudeen Badmus (Kwara United) - 4 clean sheets
- Suleiman Dogo (Insurance FC) - 2 clean sheets

APPRECIATION

The Central Organizing Committee (COC) of the Governor Douye Diri Pre-season Football Tournament wishes to express its heartfelt gratitude to:

- His Excellency, Senator Douye Diri, Governor of Bayelsa State, for his unwavering love and passion for sports development and football in particular.
- His ever-supportive Deputy, Senator Lawrence Ewhrudjakpo, for his commitment to the success of the event.
- The Sports Development Commissioner, Hon. Daniel Igali, for his tireless efforts in making the tournament a success.

Our gratitude also goes to the Honourable Commissioner for Works and Infrastructure, Esv. Moses Teibowei and the Honourable Commissioner for Youth Development, Hon. Alfred Kamapado who performed the official opening kick-off ceremony for their contributions to the success of the tournament.

- We equally congratulate and thank Bayelsa United, for making us proud by coming out tops in the keenly contested competition and the exemplary display of the spirit of sportsmanship through out the tournament.
- The participating teams always giving their best and the fans something to cheer for as well as discipline and strict adherence to the rules of the game at all times.
- The peaceful and orderly fans, for their enthusiasm, unbiased equal support to all the teams.
- The referees and match officials, for their professionalism and fair application of the laws of the game.
- We also wish to thank the media committee, particularly members of **SWAN** for their full coverage of the tournament.
- All football stakeholders, for their contributions to the success of the tournament.

The Prosperity Cup and the Pre-season tournament have been both been resounding successes, with widespread commendation from football stakeholders both within and outside the state. This is a testament to Bayelsa's growing reputation as a hub for sports development and the new destination for talent discovery.

CONCLUSION

The Governor Douye Diri Pre-Season Tournament 2024 was a resounding success, demonstrating the growth and development of football in Bayelsa State. With the Prosperity Cup paving the way for a brighter future, Bayelsa United's tournament win is a testament to the team's hard work and dedication.

The overwhelming success of the Pre-season Tournament, the followership and support of the tournament is a testament to the passion, love and commitment of Bayelsans to football and sports.

There is thus a resounding call for the female edition of the Pre-season Tournament to be held in October for the Bayelsa Queens before they commence the 2024/2025 season in November. We would like to recommend that we commence early preparation for the female edition if approved by His Excellency.