

Nigerian Footballers in England



Akieye (goalkeeper)

A TEAM of Nigerian footballers, the first ever to leave the shores of West Africa, has recently completed a visit to England. In the brief space of five weeks they have played nine matches against teams representing the cream of English amateur soccer.

The tour came about largely through the efforts of Capt. D. H. Holley, M.C., and Mr. H. W. Drake, C.B.E., who have both had a long association with Nigerian football.

Following a series of trial games in Lagos eighteen players had been chosen to make the trip, and this selection probably represents the soundest combination Nigeria can produce.

The team did not take long to establish a fine reputation not only for fast, clever football but also for excellent manners and sporting behaviour on the field.

The tour opened with a match against Marine Crosby at Liverpool, where a capacity crowd of 7,000 turned up to see the game, which resulted in a victory for the Nigerian visitors by five goals to two.

Before leaving the North and still within six days of their arrival the Nigerians met Bishop Auckland, one of the best amateur sides in the North of England.

Showing seven changes from the team which defeated Marine Crosby, they were beaten 5-2 by a fast and methodical combination. The tourists had a wonderful reception and had no reason to feel dispirited by this reversal of fortune.

The following day the Nigerian team travelled south by train and found the heat of Britain's warmest September day for 38 years almost as trying as the tropical sun of their Home Country.

The London programme opened with a match against Leytonstone, where a crowd of over 10,000 people saw a game full of thrills and good football. The fast, quick-thinking and nimble Nigerians brought the best out of Leytonstone, one of the outstanding English amateur sides for the past few seasons.

Nigeria lost by the odd goal of three scored almost on time in semi-darkness.

Other matches briefly recorded were :

- 1-5 *v. Isthmian League.* After holding the initiative for the greater part of the first half the Nigerians tired rapidly after the resumption.
- 2-2 *v. Corinthian League.* A very good match with Nigeria pressing hard right until the last minute. Excellent keeping on the part of the Corinthian goalie prevented a Nigerian victory.
- 0-1 *v. Dulwich Hamlet.* A fine performance, the only goal being scored within two minutes of the second half kick-off.
- 0-8 *v. Athenian League.* Played in the rain; the barefooted Nigerians had great difficulty in retaining a foothold.
- 3-1 *v. Bromley F.C.* After being a goal down at half-time the Nigerians produced some football of a very high order, scoring three goals in the second half. The Bromley crowd gave the Nigerian team a wonderful reception. As is well known, Bromley are the Amateur Cup holders.
- 2-2 *v. Liverpool South.* Played by flood-light. The Nigerians, and especially their goalkeeper, found the unfamiliar conditions rather trying. On the run of the play they ought to have won this game.

Reports from Overseas

THE BELGIAN CONGO

EARLY in 1948 the Belgian Congo Government Information Service embarked on an ambitious plan of educational instruction of the native population of the Colony by means of motion pictures. In addition to the regular programmes arranged by the Information Service itself, institutions, schools, missions and commercial firms were urged and encouraged to secure 16 mm. projection equipment for the purpose of providing entertainment and instruction for the Africans within the scope of their respective activities. All state schools were to be provided with projectors. Subsidised missions were to receive one-half the cost of such equipment from the Government, and private firms urged in their own interests, as well as in the general interest of the native population supported by their activities, to provide themselves with equipment for visual education and entertainment.

The use of motion pictures among the natives had developed on a comparatively large scale during the war. While films had been used to a minor extent by some of the missions and other organisations working with the Congo natives, it was not until the Congolese soldier went to North Africa and other battle-fronts that the full value of this medium of mass instruction was realised. The success of the film shows presented by the various Allied Welfare Services influenced the Force Publique to institute similar programmes at home.