

My experience with Covid-19 - Justinus

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KEEP BELIEVING: Local footballer Epafras Justinus urges athletes to stay positive.
PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

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Local footballer Epafras Justinus says Covid-19 has derailed his dream but that he continues to believe that circumstances will change for the better.

Born and raised in Oshakati, 20-year-old Justinus started playing football an early age with Foxy Academy in Oshakati in the second division.

He said his dream has always been to play outside Namibia. "That's why I keep working hard continue to look for opportunities by myself."

Justinus explained that opportunities started coming in during his high school years at Onawa Secondary School in the northern part of Namibia.

Building a portfolio

"I had then joined Young Chiefs and even won a gold medal with them in the International University of Management (IUM) tournament after having taken part in several tournaments like the Ruacana Easter tournament. "I got a lot of opportunities

there after outside Namibia, but my parents never gave permission for me to travel, as I was still in high school.

“I moved to the capital last year for my studies and then joined premier league club Citizens. The domestic league at some point came to a halt due to football politics and then I decided to join Young Generation, which is a second-division club.”

Making decisions

Justinus said that he decided not to have any contract with local clubs as his dream is to play outside the country. “I told the coach to help me find a club outside Namibia. He found Maccabi in Israel but due to Covid-19, I couldn't travel for trials which really hurt. I prepared very well. I also got an opportunity in Macedonia and Kazakhstan which I was referred by an agent from Ghana, but now I'm stuck.”

Learning from seniors

“I'm in touch with Brave Warriors players such as Benson Shilongo (Egypt), Teberius Lombard (Zambia) and Sadney Urikhob (Thailand).

“Urikhob motivates me a lot. He is always there to help when I don't understand what agents say.

“Covid-19 ruined everything and sometimes training from home doesn't really help because it's different when you train in a group setting. I really hope this nightmare ends and football resumes.

“Football is a short-term career and I'm desperate to shine now and be able to make money out of it. My dream is to also represent my country someday but for now it is to secure a club outside Namibia,” added Justinus.

He advised Namibian footballers to have video clips as it will make it easier to convince agents of their talents.

Justinus further encouraged those in the same boat as him to think positive all the time. “Keep training, things will get better.”