



• Black Galaxies celebrating one of their goals yesterday

Algeria 2023 CHAN qualifier

Galaxies outshine Eagles

• Ahead of Abuja clash

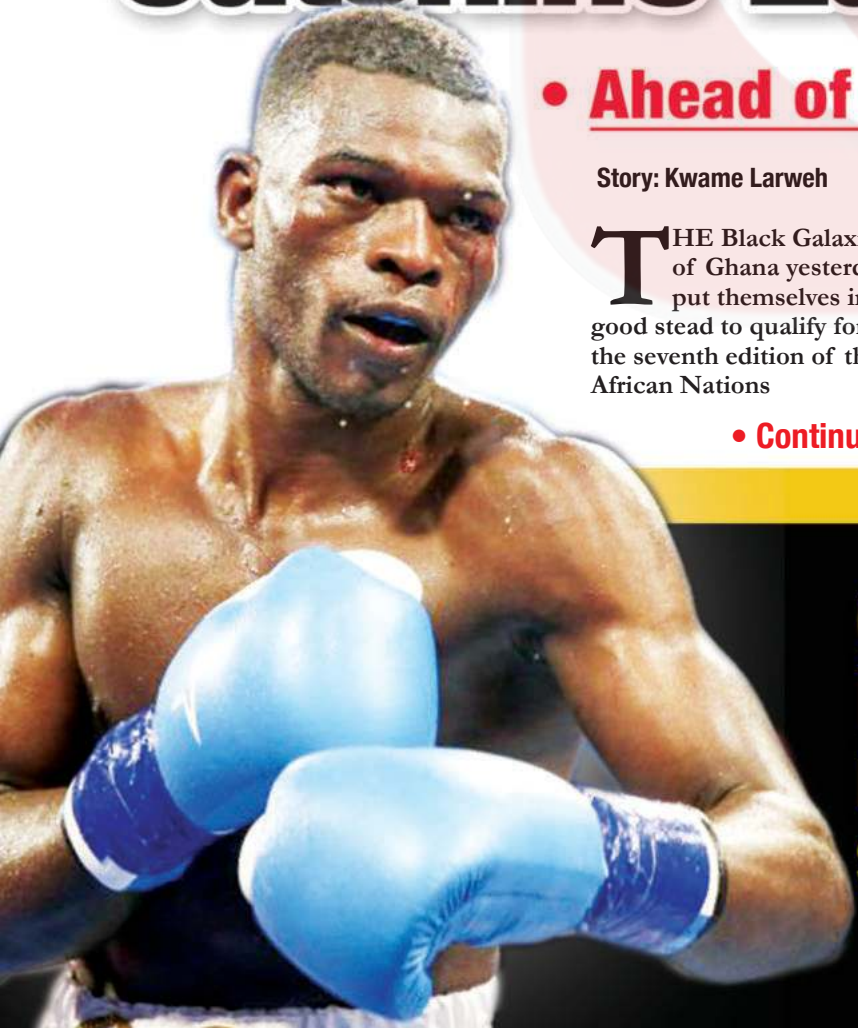
Story: Kwame Larweh

THE Black Galaxies of Ghana yesterday put themselves in good stead to qualify for the seventh edition of the African Nations

Championship (CHAN) after registering a 2-0 victory over the CHAN Eagles of Nigeria.

After three consecutive absence from the continent's second most prestigious tournament, the Galaxies put

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Commey, Pedraza records split draw

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Omar cries for Glasgow 2014 bonus

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Ghana targets history at African Games

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The Ray Quarcoo legacy lives on

By Ekow Asmah

THE national amateur boxing team, the Black Bombers, continue to shine, in spite of official state neglect, dominating the narrative in discussions about the medal-winning sporting disciplines, at the recently concluded Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The Black Bombers hauled three medals at the Birmingham Games. Bantamweight Abraham Mensah and featherweight Joseph Commey won silver, while Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games bronze medalist, Wahid Omar, won bronze in the light welterweight division, totalling their largest haul at the Games in recent memory.

At the centre of attention, Black Bombers head coach, Dr Kwasi Ofori Asare, who also coached featherweight Samuel Takyi to his, and Africa's sole boxing medal (bronze) at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics held last year, on account of the global scourge, the COVID-19 disease, has been glowing in the spotlight.

Coach Asare, born and bred in James Town, is a former boxer, taught as a juvenile by the doyen of boxing coaches, the late great Surpriser Sowah.

Sowah's wards include Roy Ankrah (a former British Empire featherweight champion), Attuquaye Clotley (whose tutelage earned Ghana her first world boxing champion, David Kotei), Sam Ago Kotey, and Amon Kotey (a world championship bronze medalist) and F. A. Moses (a former coach of Azumah Nelson, Ghana's sole inductee into the International Boxing Hall of Fame).

It is obvious Coach Asare's name is in great company with the aforementioned boxing



• Ambassador Ray Quarcoo

immortals.

Yet, the highly skilled coach recognizes Goodwill Ambassador, Ray Quarcoo, a former president of the Ghana Amateur Boxing Federation (GABF), now known as the Ghana Boxing Federation (GBF), as the seal to the foundations of the doyen trainer, Surpriser Sowah, of Spartan Boxing repute, and former GABF president, Eddy DuPlan.

"Eddy DuPlan took me to a training course in Italy, before Ray Quarcoo became the president.

"Then, coaching changed from diplomas and certificates to IBA Standard Coaching. Ambassador Ray Quarcoo did very well, because at the time he was the president was the time I became an (IBA) Instructor.

"So, he gave me that fame, because I think he had a little bit of confidence in me, giving me that opportunity," says Asare, adding that Quarcoo's results-oriented approach required the highest standards. Hence, Ray Quarcoo enrolling Ofori Asare and Vincent Akai Nettey, for the IBA-accredited courses, culminating in their attainment of the sole 3-Star and 2-Star IBA licences, respectively.

"Anytime we went to

Rahman Lawson, Sulemana Tetteh and Gibrine Ahmed, to the world championship.

"They'd never had the exposure of going outside, but during Ray Quarcoo's time, all boxers were given a chance to improve, and prove themselves.

"Also, he took the Black Bombers (including Maxwell Amponsah and Frederick Lawson) to the senior world championship, in Italy, and the boxer known as Akuffo Addo, to the senior world championship in Chicago, a Beijing 2008 Olympic qualifier.

"I learned a lot during his time, by going to those competitions, being exposed.

"Also, I remember, on the road to the London 2012 Olympics, the IBA had set up a training camp in Wales, and he (Ray Quarcoo) was able to connect us to the training camp of IBA, to be trained by their elite coaches, in preparations for the 2012 Olympics. It was also a learning process for me. So, it was during his time that I learned more.

"So, I can say he and Eddy DuPlan (a predecessor of Ray

Quarcoo) created the base, from which we're getting all these benefits", concludes Ofori Asare.

Those "benefits" include Australia 2018 Commonwealth Games bronze medalist, light middleweight Jessie Lartey, and Birmingham 2022 bronze medalist, light welterweight Wahid Omar.

Other beneficiaries, Birmingham Games silver medalists Abraham Mensah and Joseph Commey, popularly known as Jaguar, have declared their determination to continue to raise the national flag for the Ghana 2023 African Games, targeting gold medals in readiness to take the Paris 2024 Olympics by storm, to build on the success story of Samuel Takyi, now campaigning in the paid ranks.

Those goals, while lofty, are attainable by the ambitious fighters, tapping into the physical, tactical, physiological, technical and psychological tutelage of the IBA instructor named Ofori Asare, a great beneficiary of the Ray Quarcoo legacy.



• Coach Ofori Asare (second from left) with Commonwealth Games medallists