



a second and Marcos Alonso curled but have played more games than

ACORNBUSH AIM TO AMBUSH AMAKHOSI

Wishful thinking perhaps, but it's been done before, after all

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WHAT chance Acornbush United adding their name to the list of lower division clubs that have knocked the mighty Kaizer Chiefs out of the country's premier knockout cup competition?

The ABC Motsepe League outfit host Amakhosi in the Nedbank Cup round of last 16 at Kabokweni Stadium today (3pm) intent on emulating all of Seshego Stonebreakers, AmaTuks (University of Pretoria), FC Cape Town and Baroka FC.

All these four clubs sent Chiefs packing from the competition in its different guises under different sponsors as they sprung what remain some of the local game's greatest shocks.

Following Chiefs' win over Mamelodi Sundowns last week, not many will give the Mpumalanga outfit a chance of beating Steve Komphela's side.

But then again no one had bet on any of the above-mentioned clubs being victorious when they took on the Phefeni Glamour Boys.

Lest it be forgotten, Acornbush earned this plum fixture courtesy of a win over the elite league's team of the moment, Telkom Knockout champions and Absa Premiership pace-setters Cape Town City.

And, while they will go into the match as underdogs, Acornbush cannot be discounted to do to Chiefs what Stonebreakers did to them back in 1978 in the Sales House Champs of Champs.

In their team back then, Stonebreakers had the likes of former Bafana Bafana coach Trott Moloto as they stunned Amakhosi to progress to the next round and actually reach the final.

It wasn't until 31 years later that a similar humiliating feat befell the country's most popular team – Chiefs going down 4-3 to the University of Pretoria in a match that is best remembered for Jimmy Tau stopping to play after he mistook a whistle from the crowd to that of the referee.

That AmaTuks had come from 2-1 down made the success all the

more special as players like Mthokozisi Yende (signed by Chiefs thereafter), Andile Jali and Phenyong Mongalo (both joined Orlando Pirates) shone bright. Like Stonebreakers, they too, went on to reach the final.

That defeat marked the beginning of a miserable period for Amakhosi in the competition as they went on to lose to lower division outfits in the next two editions of the competition.

First up was FC Cape Town who beat them 2-0 with a young Lyle Lakay – a star for Bloemfontein Celtic – opening the scoring and Samuel Eboule Bille sealed a famous win for the Mother City outfit.

And then Baroka FC showed that the AmaTuks and FC Cape Town successes were no flukes as they, too, put Chiefs to the sword in Polokwane.

Whereas AmaTuks and FC Cape Town were in the second tier league, Baroka were campaigning in the third tier and it is their victory Acornbush will probably look at for inspiration.

Led by the one-gloved Sello Chokoe, Baroka looked set for a hammering when Knowledge Musona put Chiefs ahead only for Sam Ndlovu to cancel it out just before half-time before Thobani Mncwango scored the winner.

Acornbush coach MacDonald Makhubedu has said they are focused on the promotion play-offs even though the Chiefs clash is the biggest in their history. But he did express a desire to shock Amakhosi. How they'd love that in Mpumalanga – to have their team beat the country's "biggest" team in the Cup. Chances of it happening are slim, but not impossible.

It's been done before, after all.

- In today's final last 16 match, Bloemfontein Celtic host Mbombela United (3pm).

- Orlando Pirates put in perhaps their best performance under new coach Kjell Jonevret to defeat Free State Stars 4-1 last night and move into the quarter-finals.

The match at James Motlatsi Stadium saw the Buccaneers avenge a 3-2 loss at the hands of Ea Lila Koto at the same venue in the Absa Premiership last weekend.

