



VESELIN SLIPS IN AT CELTIC

Troughton promises Ea Lla Koto the stars

By **BILLY COOPER** and **BUSISIWE MOKWENA**

FREE State clubs Bloemfontein Celtic and Free State Stars unveiled their respective new coaches yesterday.

Phunya Sele Sele introduced little known Serbian coach, Veselin Jelusic, to South African football while *Ea Lla Koto* recalled Sammy Troughton to their bench.

Jelusic used to coach in Botswana (2002) and Angola's development teams but has never coached in South Africa before. Celtic are hoping he will bring a change in their fortunes.

Club chief executive Khumbulani Konco said the Serbian, who signed a two-year contract, came highly recommended by top football officials from outside the country.

The coach has been mandated to rebuild the Bloem club and qualify *Sivelele* for the top eight next season.

Konco said: "This is a general mandate."

He also confirmed that the Acornbush duo of Mduuzi Nkosi and Rhulani Sidumo are training with the club with the hope of signing contracts.

"I can confirm that they're training with us but we don't have their clearances yet. Paperwork has not yet been finalised," he added.

Troughton, who left Stars eight years ago when he was assistant to Kinnah Phiri, has said he is raring to go and happy to be "back home" in Bethlehem.

His last PSL job was when University of Pretoria were relegated in 2016. He joined National First Division outfit Stellenbosch FC last season and guided them to the promotion play-offs.

Ea Lla Koto general manager Rantsi Mokoena confirmed yesterday that the Irish born coach had signed a two-year contract, saying: "We are thrilled to have Sammy back. We know what he can do. He has an impressive record in the NFD and has coached in the PSL. He has been around the local coaching scene for many, many years, he knows his way around and is a good coach."

"I decided against a foreign coach, as you never know what you are getting. I know what we are getting with Troughton. What impressed me was the way he got an ordinary side like Stellenbosch to the play-offs."

Mokoena said he would sit down with his new coach and work out targets: "There are no mandates at Stars. I'm looking to get stability back and believe Sammy will do that. We obviously want success."

Troughton takes over today: "I'm looking forward to

going back. The wheel has turned full circle.

"I relish the challenge. I got MP Black Aces promoted to the PSL, helped *AmaTuks* get promoted to the PSL and we came close with Stellenbosch. I'm looking forward to working with the Mokoena family again. They are good people and are a real soccer family. I enjoyed my last stint there."

Troughton, the former Mamelodi Sundowns defender, will be reunited with his friend Sly Mosala, who will be his assistant again. Said Troughton: "Sly and I go back 20 years when I coached him at *AmaTuks* in the Vodacom League. We are good friends."



New Bloemfontein Celtic coach, Veselin Jelusic, shakes hands with his new boss Max Tshabalala (right) after concluding a two year-deal yesterday.

