



Troughton takes over at Free State Stars

Thanks club boss Mike Mokoena for having faith in local coaches to get club in gear for new season

SITHEMBISO DINDI

FREE State Stars new head coach Sammy Troughton has paid tribute to club chairperson Mike Mokoena for his continued belief in local coaches.

Yesterday, the former Mpumalanga Black Aces and University of Pretoria coach was appointed as the replacement for Serame Letsoaka, whose contract was not renewed.

Troughton, who recently was with Stellenbosch FC in the National First Division, will conduct his first training session today.

"I have to thank the chairman of the club for the trust he has shown in me that I can lead the club in the right direction," Troughton said.

"As local coaches, we don't get chances in the PSL. Most clubs prefer overseas coaches but at Stars there was Serame before me. Management is willing to give us a chance.

"It's a great opportunity for me as I have been working hard to be back in the PSL but unfortunately we fell at the playoffs hurdle with Stellenbosch."

Before Letsoaka was appointed in the beginning of the season, Ea Lla Koto had been under the guidance of foreign coaches for two years where they underwent seven coaching changes.

Without a doubt, Troughton will be looking to do better at the club and stay a bit longer than Letsoaka who only lasted for six months with Ea Lla Koto.

Under the helm of Letsoaka, Stars almost got relegated to the NFD after finishing the season 14th with

28 points.

They avoided having to fight for their survival at playoffs through their better goal difference as they tied on equal points with Baroka FC.

"Inconsistency has been the problem for Free State Stars and we need to quickly find out what has been the cause for that," Troughton said.

"My first aim is to make sure that we have a good start in the season because you don't want to be struggling early in the season. That might be a sign of bad things coming your way, so we need to avoid that."

At Stars he will be reunited with Sly Mosala who joined the club last month as one of the two assistant coaches.

"It's an advantage for me. As a matter of fact, I have worked with both Sly and David Vilakazi before and we worked very well together," Troughton said.

"I have been with the club before and I am familiar with the surroundings there.

I guess that should work in my favour."

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EARLY RISER:

Sammy Troughton is still to determine what held Stars back last season, but says they must collect points from their early games.

PICTURE: GALLO IMAGES

