

THE BALL 2010

Every four years "The Ball" aptly dubbed "Football's Olympic Torch" kicks off from its "Mount Olympus" - Battersea Park in London, and begins its journey to the opening ceremony of the FIFA World Cup.

In 2010 Special Olympics Africa teamed up with The Ball for an epic journey beginning in Dakar, Senegal and ending in Johannesburg, South Africa.

As a partner of Special Olympics Africa (SOA), Spirit of Football, the organization behind The Ball, aimed to showcase the achievements of intellectually disabled athletes in Africa through joint activities around The Ball.

In 2010, The Ball was made in Africa, by Africa, for Africa through a partnership with the social enterprise Alive and Kicking. They provide repairable hand-stitched leather balls that are suitable for the tough playing conditions in Africa.

In Africa "The Ball" teamed up with Special Olympics programs in Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Namibia, Botswana and South Africa. Activities centered around Unified® Sport were held in each country which included many games of football that included Special Olympics athletes competing in teams with mainstream partners.

DHL Sub-Saharan Africa partnered with Special Olympics Africa on this incredible journey of inclusion and acceptance. Their support was integral to the successes experienced and ensured that enormous awareness was created about intellectual disability in Africa.

The Ball 2010 Partners



ALIVE & KICKING

Sponsored by



THE BALL - 10 000 miles, 17 000 signatures and a message for all.

The Ball was a symbol of Unity; It was One Ball, One World ... the same ball played with by all. That is the Spirit of Football, the spirit of unity, the spirit of inclusion ... the spirit of Special Olympics!

"Special Olympics and The Ball together broke down many of the barriers and divisions that the world faces. The journey to the World Cup created understanding and friendships through sport, something that Special Olympics accomplishes daily, throughout the world."

Dr John Dow Jr - President and Managing Director, Special Olympics Africa

With an African ball, we have learned that this is Africa's World Cup. We've seen that people on this continent are generous, friendly and full of life. We've come to care passionately about Special Olympics' and the fantastic work that the organisation is doing across Africa.

It doesn't matter if you are black, white, orange or red.... it doesn't matter if you are old or young.... nor if you are male or female....

it doesn't matter if you are good at football or not and it certainly doesn't matter whether or not you have an intellectual disability...

The Ball is for everyone...

Spirit of Football

"DHL Express Sub Saharan Africa is proud to have been part of this initiative with Special Olympics Africa; to share our logistical expertise and support for "The Ball" and it's representatives during their travels through 14 Sub Saharan countries. The bright yellow procession of DHL vehicles moving through Africa certainly helped heighten the awareness of "The Ball" and DHL employees experienced first-hand what a great and worthwhile positive message the journey communicates to thousands of people from all walks of life; a message to break down boundaries and end negative stereotypes about people with learning disabilities but also to celebrate how football excites passions and enriches lives."

Phil Couchman - Director of DHL Sub-Saharan Africa



Special Olympics Africa (SOA) launched its partnership with The Ball in conjunction with the launch of the African Football Initiative. The event took place at Soccerex 2010 in Nelson Mandela Square, Johannesburg, South Africa with a friendly Unified® celebrity football challenge. Special Olympics athletes competed in two teams with celebrity teammates Lucas Radebe, Mark Fish, Shaun Bartlett, Janine van Wyk, Darren “Wackhead” Simpson, Bongani Nxumalo and Revin John. First Lady, Mrs MaNtuli Zuma, kicked off the match which raised enormous awareness for The Ball both locally and internationally.





SENEGAL

Senegal had the privilege of being the first Special Olympics program country to welcome The Ball on its journey through Africa and they had organized a number of key activities to ensure that they maximized the opportunity.

- Local media were invited to meet The Ball team and to learn more about the journey and the partnership with Special Olympics.
- A DHL supported cavalcade set off from INSEP, the National Sports Institute, to visit special schools in Dakar. Students and staff alike at the Talibou Dabo, Estel and Aminata Mbaye schools enthusiastically welcomed the arrival of the symbol of unity and inclusion.
- The cavalcade stopped off at the Mayor's office where The Ball was signed by the Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Mayor. The Mayor generously promised to have a number of facilities opened up for training and other activities for Special Olympics Senegal athletes.
- The Ball entourage had the privilege of meeting with the Minister of Sport who promised his full support to a very grateful Special Olympics Senegal.
- A well-supported Unified® Football game which included Special Olympics athletes and partners was held as a curtain raiser to a tournament between Dakar based football academies at the Iba Mar Diop Stadium.





MALI

The Ball was officially received in Mali at a reception which was generously sponsored by the Minister of Sport. Here, the unique journey and its aims were presented to both political and sports officials.

Special Olympics Mali had organized a number of activities to highlight their relationship with The Ball and the achievements of their athletes.

- The Vice-President of the Malian Football Federation, FEMAFOOT, chaired a press conference at their headquarters to promote The Ball's stay in Mali and to create awareness of the great work being done by Special Olympics Mali in the country.
- While in Mali, The Ball was presented to a number of high profile individuals. These included the Governor of Bamako, football legend Salif Keita, the Mayor of Kati and the Mayor, Governor and deputy Governor of Kayes.
- FEMAFOOT sponsored a Unified® Football game held as a curtain raiser to a scheduled National Championship Football match. The game included players from local Special Olympics programs as well as both "Rive Gauche" and "Rive Droite" clubs. The Ball also participated in a Special Olympics curtain raiser match at Abdoulaye Marcoro stadium.
- Pupils at AMALDEME, a school for intellectually disabled children in Bamako, were thrilled to have the opportunity to play with and sign The Ball.
- A presentation was made to the National Assembly of Mali. The presentation was chaired by the President of The National Assembly, Mr Dioncouda Traore who committed to partnering with Special Olympics Mali to the delight of the organization.





BURKINA FASO

Special Olympics Burkina Faso and the DHL team enthusiastically welcomed The Ball upon their arrival in the country. They had organized a number of exciting events in Ouagadougou.

- They kicked off with an official reception with the Minister of Sports and Leisure who committed to a partnership with Special Olympics Burkina Faso to the delight of all involved.
- The Director of Regulation and Infrastructure also chaired a press conference on behalf of the Minister of Sports and Leisure which enabled Special Olympics Burkina Faso to engage with local media on the journey of The Ball and the aims of the partnership.
- A Unified® Football game was hosted by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Sports and Leisure. The football game gave Special Olympics athletes to showcase their talents as they participated enthusiastically with their partners
- The Ball team was presented to His Majesty, Mogho Naba Baongo, Emperor of the Mosse´ who graciously conducted a tour of his private sporting museum, a rare opportunity which they enjoyed immensely.
- Students of the Arch of Nongr-maasem, a centre for people with intellectual disabilities, where delighted at the opportunity to meet The ball team and to sign The Ball.
- The Ball team visited a Special Olympics sub-program in Saaba where they got the opportunity to engage with the athletes and coaches from the program. While in Saaba the team had the opportunity to meet with the Governor and to present The Ball to him.





COTE D I'VOIRE

Cote d' Ivoire was the next program on The Ball's itinerary and the anticipation was building from program to program as reports of the outstanding success of The Ball initiative were being received.

- Special Olympics Cote d' Ivoire had organized a very well attended press conference at the National Institute of Public Health in Adjame, which resulted in an impressive amount of local press coverage.
- A highly visible cavalcade was staged with the help of DHL through all seven municipalities of the city of Abidjan. En route The Ball was presented to the Mayor or his representative in each of the Municipalities.
- The Minister of Sport also welcomed The Ball at the Parc des Sports stadium during the official launch of the annual school and university sports activities. The Minister generously committed his support to Special Olympics Cote d' Ivoire who were very grateful for this commitment.
- A Unified® Football tournament was held on the grounds of the Lycee Classique high school where football celebrities, sports personalities and young players from local football academy participated with Special Olympics athletes. The Director of cabinet for the Ministry of Sport was also on hand to lend his support.
- A farewell dinner was sponsored by the Minister of Sport and attended by all who had participated in the organization of the events in Abidjan as well as a number of guest dignitaries and officials.





TOGO

Special Olympics Togo and DHL were on hand at the border with a distinguished welcoming committee to greet The Ball and to provide an escort into Lomé.

- The Ball was warmly welcomed at the Togo-Ghana border by the Chief of Cabinet of the Ministry of Sports and Leisure, the representative of the Togolese Olympic Committee Chair along with several other sports personalities
- Once in Lome' a DHL cavalcade escorted The Ball to City Hall to meet with the Mayor of Lomé who played with and signed The Ball, the cavalcade then moved on to the Minister of Sport who added his signature.
- During its stay in Togo The Ball was officially presented to the Togolese Prime Minister at his office. On behalf of the Head of State, he expressed his congratulations to Special Olympics Togo on a very successful initiative and on the work of the program.
- The Minister of Sport and Leisure hosted a well attended press conference to introduce The Ball initiative to the media and to explain the partnership with Special Olympics.
- UNICEF and the Goethe Institute supported and participated in Unified® sport event which proved very popular with the public.
- Football related activities were held at the Lome beach where the youth showed off their football skills. The event was attended by over 2,000 people.





BENIN

Prior to The Balls arrival Special Olympics Benin had run an intensive media campaign to create awareness around their planned activities for The Ball. They also had a welcoming committee waiting at the border which included officials from the Benin border police.

- The Ball delegation was officially welcomed to Benin by the Chief of Staff of the Ministry of Sport, supported by the Secretary General of the Ministry and central department managers.
- A press conference was hosted by National Director of Special Olympics Benin which was attended by over 40 media houses.
- The Ball visited a centre for the intellectually disabled where it was enthusiastically welcomed by Special Olympics athletes, staff and family members.
- A presentation on the initiative was made to the Chief of staff at the Office of the Mayor and the management of the Benin Football Federation.
- The Ball participated in a Unified® Football match while in Benin and had their first opportunity to participate in a Healthy Athletes® screening. The event was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Sport, Social Affairs, Social Security and Solidarity.
- The Ball was also presented to the Supreme Leader of the Vodoo Cult, the Global Head, who blessed the further travels of The Ball.





NIGERIA

Special Olympics Nigeria hosted a successful press conference prior to the arrival of The Ball to generate public awareness of the activities that they had planned for the initiative.

- An official welcome ceremony and events for The Ball were held at the Astro Turf 2000, Ikoyi. The highlight of the event was a Unified® Football Match with players from Special Olympics and the Copa Coca-Cola players. Ex Super Eagles football legends Yisa Sofoluwe, Tarila Okorowanta, Jide Oguntuwase and Fatai Bisiriyu Dagama officiated the match. This was the first ever Unified® football match played in Nigeria.
- Guests at the event were representative from corporate partners Coca-Cola Nigeria, Guaranty Trust Bank Plc, Astro Turf 2000 and Publicis Soulcomm. DHL, Special Olympics Africa partner on The Ball initiative was also in attendance as was the Lagos State Football Association.
- The Ball team were the guests of a Pentecostal Church, The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Jehovah Shammah parish. The congregation welcomed the initiative and added their signatures to The Ball.
- Special Olympics Nigeria also partnered with Search and Groom, a NGO for street soccer, to organize more Unified® Football matches during The Ball's visit.





CAMEROON

DHL Cameroon met The Ball in Douala and then transported the team to Yaounde for an official welcome at the DHL office where Special Olympics Cameroon were waiting to meet.

- An official presentation on the initiative was made to the Secretary General of the Ministry of Youth in front of a number of media houses including the state owned radio and TV channel – CRTV, and a large audience of top officials from the Ministry of Youth. The Secretary general congratulated Special Olympics Cameroon, with whom they have had a long relationship, on The Ball initiative.
- The Secretary General then invited the team to visit the PIFMAS project which is similar to Alive and Kicking. The Ball, which was definitely showing the effects of its travels, was later repaired in one of the PIFMAS workshops.
- A visit was scheduled to the National Sports Institute (I.N.J.S) where students of the institute were eagerly awaiting the arrival of The Ball team. The Ball team first met with the Director General who congratulated all on the initiative. In his presentation to the students the DG encouraged the students to spread the message of inclusion, acceptance and fair play.
- A Unified® Football tournament had been organized which included Special Olympics athletes and girls and boys from the Lycee Biyem'Assi. The event included Healthy Athlete screening at the Yaounde Omnisport Stadium.
- The visit to Cameroon was concluded with a cavalcade through the streets of Yaounde.





KENYA

Special Olympics Kenya and DHL staff were on hand to welcome The Ball team at Jomo Kenyatta Airport and to ensure that all went smoothly at customs.

- An early morning awaited them the next day with half-hour live television interview on the breakfast show at The Nation Television studio.
- The Ball initiative was presented to the Mayor of Nairobi at his office which was attended by the Kenyan Legends football team and a large press contingent. To the delight of Special Olympics Kenya, The Mayor confirmed that Special Olympics Athletes would have free use of sports facilities under the jurisdiction of local authority.
- The Ball got some much needed attention at the Alive and Kicking offices in Kenya were the original stitcher, Kimani, repaired some of the wear and tear.
- A visit had been organized to the Musa Otieno Foundation, which regularly hosts interactive mini-competitions with Special Olympics athletes. The excited athletes competed in a Unified® Football game.
- The Special Olympics Club at Kenyatta University hosted The Ball with a day of football and other activities. Over 300 hundred students, staff and youth attended and enjoyed the event.
- Over 350 Special Olympics Kenya athletes joined The Ball team at Nairobi University for a Unified® Football Tournament. The highlight of the event was a game between the Kenyan Legends football team and a Unified® Special Olympics team.





TANZANIA

Special Olympics Tanzania ran an extensive media campaign prior to the arrival of The Ball to ensure public awareness of their planned activities.

- The Balls arrived at Julius Nyerere airport to a large crowd of supporters and were treated to traditional music and dancers. The crowd also enjoyed the entertainment and the presentation on The Ball initiative. This set the mood for a colorful cavalcade through the streets of Dar es Salaam and even 2010 mascot, Zakumi, came out to support and participate.
- The Deputy Minister of Sport was on hand to officially welcome The Ball team to Tanzania at the Karume Stadium. A Special Olympics Unified® Football match was held as a curtain raiser to a big match involving the under 20 National Team and Azam Football club.
- A visit was made to the Uhuru School for People with Intellectual Disabilities where the pupils and staff had an opportunity to engage with The Ball.
- The Ball also paid a visit to Precision Air, one of the sponsors of the visit to Tanzania.
- The Minister of Community Development, Gender and Children was the guest of honor at a special Children's Day held to celebrate The Ball. 20 Teams of boys and girls participated in several league matches where they were joined by Special Olympics Tanzania athletes.





MALAWI

In Malawi the celebration of The Ball's arrival started with a ceremonial parade with a number of organisations supporting the initiative from the Malawi Polytechnic to Kazuma Stadium.

- Over 200 athletes had gathered at Kazuma stadium to participate in the event. The Ball was officially received by the Minister of Sport, the guest of honor, who was very supportive of Special Olympics and of the impact of Unified® Sport.
- Special Olympics Malawi athletes from various centers participated enthusiastically with partners in 11-a-side Unified® Football during the event.
- The event was sponsored by the Malawi National Council of Sport, DHL, Patsogolo Stuart Ginever's Memorial School, Dailyboard, Play Soccer Malawi, MTL Wanderers and Escom United Football Club and was widely covered by the local media which created enormous public awareness of the initiative.





NAMIBIA

Special Olympics Namibia had been eagerly awaiting the arrival of The Ball and the team was met en-route to Windhoek in the Kavango region by a local special Olympics program and prominent local leaders including the Regional Governor.

- Once in Namibia an awareness workshop was held for local media to introduce them to the initiative and the planned itinerary in Namibia.
- The Kehemu School held an open air assembly where The Ball team was introduced to the pupils and staff. The school has a very motivated group of Special Olympics athletes and coaches who enthusiastically applauded The Ball team for their efforts to address inclusion.
- City police, DHL personnel, volunteer bikers, athletes and a Windhoek tour bus assembled at the Mayor's office to welcome The Ball and to begin a parade through the city centre to promote the initiative. The parade ended at Sam Nujoma stadium where a number of activities were held. The main event of the day was a game between parliamentarians and diplomats which was watched by approximately 500 spectators. The Minister of Youth, National Service, Sports and Culture officially flagged the match.
- Key sponsors were also visited by The Ball, these included First National Bank, the Mobile Telecommunications company, the Diamond Company in Namibia. DHL Namibia played a key role in all the events and The Ball tour was widely covered by the media in Namibia.





BOTSWANA

Special Olympics Botswana began promoting The Ball well ahead of its arrival. An official launch was attended by Presidents of approximately 20 sports codes, official sponsor; DHL, government officials and Special Olympic athletes.

- The Ball's first outing In Botswana was to Kanye, to meet a group of about 700 students of an inclusive primary school called Segopotso. They were joined by teachers, parents, local government officials, law enforcement officers and general public.
- Two other schools in the village of Ramotswa, Mokgosi Primary school and Thuto Boswa Rehabilitation Centre were also visited by The Ball which participated in a Unified® Football match.
- The former First Lady, a patron of Special Olympics Botswana, welcomed the ball at her residence and added her signature to the many already on the ball.
- In Mochiudi village, The ball visited a school called Kgafela where over 600 pupils, teachers and the public were waiting to welcome it and participate in a football match. The Ball also visited Motswedi centre to meet Special Olympics athletes there.
- In the main event a short parade was undertaken to local school grounds where law enforcement officers, the local chief, members of parliament, the Sports Director from the Ministry of Sports, the Vice-Chair of the Sports Council, the District Commissioner, the FIFA office in Botswana and teachers came to witness the proceedings. A curtain-raiser match was held between DHL staff and Special Olympics Botswana. This was followed by a Unified® football match.





SOUTH AFRICA

Special Olympics South Africa welcomed The Ball back into the country in a well-used condition and boasting over 15, 000 signatures. One key event was planned as The Ball arrived mere days before the opening ceremony of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

- A cavalcade led by DHL vehicles and local metro police escorted “the Ball” and the Olympic torch through the streets of Lenasia to the venue at Signet terrace, where the proceedings kicked off with the Opening Ceremony.
- 48 female athletes participated in 11-a-side Unified® Football match and were cheered on by spectators from local schools and the general public.
- Athletes were entertained by the Underground Soccer Freestylers (USG) while The Ball trio and the UGS players got ready for their exhibition match.
- DHL were on hand to provide logistical support and merchandise to spectators and players.
- The Ball had come full circle and had completed an incredible 10 000 mile journey to be in Africa for the FIFA 2010 Football World Cup.

During the stay in South Africa The Ball had the opportunity to attend the Special Olympics Coca-Cola Unity Cup, which was held just before the quarter final of the FIFA 2010 Football World Cup at Greenpoint Stadium in Cape Town. President Zuma captained one of the teams and is seen here in a practice session with Special Olympics athletes, numerous football legends and celebrities the day before the Unity Cup match.





One Ball, One World

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