

Chiefs, Downs get ready for a dance off

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IN A RARE sight Mamelodi Sundowns and Kaizer Chiefs players were in unison as they regaled the masses in Mamelodi yesterday.

Chiefs duo George Maluleka and Keagan Ritchie and Sundowns quintet Ramahlwe Mphahlele, Hompho Kekana, Kennedy Mweene, Leonardo Castro and Khaya Shozi exchanged pleasantries, posed for *selfies* and also did the famous dance *Nae Nae*. The audience at the Connected Youth event held at Matimba Drop In Centre had a field day seeing their heroes using their feet for something different. In two weeks time there will be no signs of such frivolities as both sides will be using their feet for lunging tackles, rasping shots, silky skills and breathtaking goals in the Telkom Knockout final in Durban on Day of Reconciliation.

Sundowns have been the team in form with an impressive 10 match winning streak. Chiefs have been blowing hot and cold. That Chiefs will boast the majority of support in the stands, could tip the scales in their favour.

"This is just another game and we don't know what the outcome is going to be. We might have a slight advantage in terms of supporters because we have a very big support base in Durban. People are expecting a hum-dinger. They are expecting a good game and that's what they are going to get," said Chiefs midfielder Maluleka.

Maluleka and his teammates have about two weeks to prepare for battle against the Tshwane giants and he is adamant that Amakhosi will be up to the task. "We are ready ... We are still polishing here and there and rectifying from games where we dropped points. We are still looking good and don't have a lot of injuries. We are looking forward to the game. The break is a good thing for us," said the former South Africa youth international. "Sundowns have been on form and they look threatening. On the day we will see what happens. We have grabbed the coach's philosophy with both hands and we have taken in the information in a very good way. It's just that we were unlucky in the games that we dropped points."

Maluleka and Co will meet resistance in the form of Ramahlwe Mphahlele and his defence. The Downs captain has downplayed the Brazilians' form, saying it has no bearing on the final. "This is different. It's a cup final. It's not like you are playing in the league. There's a lot at stake. The game itself is big. The league form for me doesn't count. You can't read much into that," said Mphahlele.

The Sundowns skipper will have to motivate his men and will have his work cut out for him in taming Chiefs wing George Lebese.

"George is one of the best attackers in SA football. He is not just a winger who goes on the line and showboats. He likes to score goals and make deep runs. For me, it's better the devil that you know. If I am to start the game, I have to be on my best. Midfielders are very important in modern football because they have to create and defend. They have a good midfield and I hope our guys are at their best," said the former national U20 captain.