

Chicken Licken takes coach Jose Mazibuko to the top

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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I was whiling away a few days in the Waterberg, blissfully exiled from social media so I missed the big flurry and discussion - and quite a lot of praise - around the latest Chicken Licken ad.



A lot of the chatter, I discovered when catching up, centred around the fact that the fast food giant (and they are that these days, it cannot be denied) had used two well-known football personalities – legendary player and coach, Jomo Sono, and household name coach, Gavin Hunt, to give some real spice to its soccer-based gag.

Strange tactics

The idea centres around a foreign football coach (yet another one) plying his trade in South Africa. His name is José Mercibeaucoup, which quickly gets translated into Joe Mazibuko (ha ha, not bad...).

Joe amazes friend and foe, amateur and expert, with the way his side wins matches – not in the least because his strategy seems to make no football sense. It's his team formations which have everyone stumped, though.

Not the conventional 4-4-2 for him – he does 7-2-1 or even 9-0-1. As one of his players says: “One week I am a striker, the next week a defender...”

Opposition teams are bamboozled and have no counter to the strange tactics of this foreign man. But no one knows where he gets his ideas from.

That is until we see him sitting in a Chicken Licken outlet, sketching ideas on a serviette. He scribbles 2-0-8, which happens to be his order number... Ergo, Chicken Licken is inspirational and the food of winners.

The punchline is great: Undefeated, since forever.

It's simple, it's a bit of a laugh and, as I've said before, we're in dire need of a bit of humour in our country these days. But, as with all Chicken Licken ads, there is a reminder of the delicious nature of the product... and that it has become a household name.

It also hits the news spot by getting all the extra, free publicity out of the social media debate.

Yet another Orchid to Chicken Licken and Joe Public. It's a winning formation.

Bottomless pit

We all know by now that South African Airways was sold, to the Takatso Consortium for the princely sum of R51 and, maybe or maybe not, a commitment from our government to throw more of our money down that seemingly bottomless pit by way of taking on the airline's debt.

“ SAA returns to São Paulo, Brazil with direct flights from Cape Town & Joburg. Open for sale today    Launch flights out of Cape Town on Tues, 31 October 2023 & from Johannesburg on Mon, 6 November 2023. Don't miss out! [#BookNow](https://t.co/R4GdKuwKMW) For more info, visit <https://t.co/R4GdKuwKMW> [pic.twitter.com/yIZyNiCLsD](https://t.co/yIZyNiCLsD)— SAA - South Africa (@flysaa) [June 29, 2023](#) ”

Even though the deal has yet to get the nod from the Competition Commission – cue more behind-the-scenes dealing and a tsunami of questions – the airline is determined to spread its wings once more. Quite how it is going to do that – especially with inter-continental flights – is still not clear, given that most of its long-haul fleet of Airbus A340s is grounded.

It may be thinking of leasing planes, although sources in the industry say its financial reputation may scare off even the most optimistic of international aircraft leasing companies.

Yet, to bastardise that old classic, SAA's baby must be smiling at it because it is about to "Go to Rio..."



And to prove that SAA is just as much of a salsa fellow as Peter Allen would have been back in the late 1970s, it appears to have spent all of R51 (at least in the obvious production values) making an ad to punt the resumed route.

Critics on social media pointed out, correctly, that the ad appeared to have been shot on a not terribly good quality cellphone, on board a jet with employees – some in uniform and some not – trying to tell potential flyers that are imbued with Brazilian Carnival spirit.

Add to that cheap and terrible overlaid graphics... Seldom have I seen such an amateurish ad – it's awful. And amateurish is not the image you want to convey if you're flying people at 35 000 feet across the South Atlantic.

I'm not saying there are not good people in SAA, but this just underlines how it has been brought down over the years by cadre deployment and this ad might confirm the fears of some about the quality of the product... after all, if you can't be bothered to spend time and money doing proper advertising, what does it say about the rest of the company?

Onion for SAA... with or without salsa.

ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

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