



A Lifetime Honoured. Sempebwa walks through a guard of honour at Lugogo Oval, applauded by generations he inspired on April 11. PHOTOS/COURTESY

Sempebwa lauded for six-decade symphony

Legacy Alive. In an era where statistics often define greatness, Edward Bazany Sempebwa's story reminds us that true legacy is built in quiet resilience, selfless service, and an enduring love for the gentleman's game.

BY INNOCENT NDAWULA

BAGURUSI LEGENDS T20 MATCH

Standout performers

- Benjamin Musoke - **Half-century**
- Bashir 'Badu' Ansasiira - **3 wickets**

INFO ABOUT ESB

- 60+: years in cricket
- 4: countries influenced (Uganda, Kenya, UK, regional East Africa)
- 3: terms as UCA selector chairman
- 10+: notable cricketing peers across eras
- 1 Defining Role: Custodian of cricket through transition

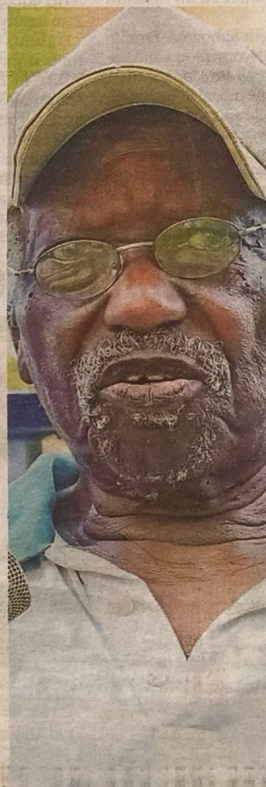
The walk was slow, assisted by a stick, but every step carried the weight of history.

As Edward Bazany Sempebwa (ESB) passed through a guard of honour at Lugogo Cricket Oval on April 11, rousing applause rose - not just for the man, but for a lifetime devoted to cricket. Around him stood generations of players, administrators, and admirers, many of whom had either played with him, against him, or benefitted from the structures he helped sustain.

This was cricket in its purest form. It was a reunion of memory, legacy, and gratitude.

Cricket first

True to the spirit of the gentleman's game, the tribute began where it all started - on the pitch. The Bagu-



TIMELINE

1946: Born

1955: Starts cricket

1958: Breaks into school team

1962-64: Sevenoaks School (UK) cricket colours

1965-66: King's College Budo (multi-sport colours)

1968-70: Makerere University Cricket; Northcote Hall captain

1972-76: Uganda national team (Cricket Cranes career)

1976-86: Club cricket in Kenya

2007-10: UCA Selection Committee Chairman

rusi Legends match brought together old rivals and teammates, including some of ESB's contemporaries, for a contest filled with laughter, nostalgia, and flashes of enduring class. Former Cricket Cranes batsman Benjamin Musoke rolled back the years with a fluent half-century, while former chairman Bashir Ansasiira turned in a sharp spell to claim three wickets. But beyond the numbers, the match was symbolic - every run and wicket a nod to the generations that built Ugandan cricket.

Humble voice

When ESB finally spoke, humility defined his tone. "The cricket I played wasn't worth writing home about," he started. The crowd chuckled. They knew better. "Did I really deserve this? I have no idea what parameters were used," he added, reflecting on the unexpected honour. Yet his record speaks volumes - Uganda national team (1972-1976), multiple half-centuries, and a reputation as one of the finest opening batters of his time.

Golden era

His finest years came between 1968 and 1976—a defining period for both his career and Ugandan cricket.

"Perhaps I played my best cricket between 1968 and 1976," he noted.

Opening alongside players like Pesiweri Nyangabyaki, ESB built partnerships that became folklore.

One such memory stood out, he recalls: "The game against Ghana in Jinja... great bowling, great batting - it remains unforgettable."

Keeper of the game

ESB belongs to the generation that held cricket together after the 1972 expulsion of Asians - a moment that nearly crippled the sport.

Legendary cricketer Sam Walusimbi captured it best:

"He's one of those we depended on to keep this game alive. We were with him all along, rebuilding cricket in schools and clubs. I have yet to see a better opening batter for Uganda - even up to now." From schools to clubs, ESB and his peers rebuilt cricket brick by brick.

Life beyond boundary

Cricket was only one part of Edward Bazany Sempebwa's story. Away from

the pitch, he built an accomplished career in information technology, spanning over three decades.

An ICT specialist of high repute, ESB rose through the ranks to become Director of Information Services at the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), with further professional training and exposure in the United States, Hungary and Ethiopia.

But beyond the titles and technical expertise, he embraced life with the same passion he carried onto the cricket field.

ESB is a man who appreciates the finer things - fast cars, good music, vibrant social hangouts and the warmth of lively company. Even in advancing age, that spirit remains intact, reflected in his humour, easy laughter and endless storytelling. He lived cricket with discipline, but life with flair.

At heart, however, his philosophy has always returned to sport.

"Children must play... sport builds resilience," he often emphasised - a belief that defined not just his journey, but the legacy he leaves behind.

Sporting soul

Long before cricket came to define his name, Sempebwa was a complete sportsman in every sense. His early years painted the picture of a young athlete shaped by discipline, curiosity, and a deep love for competition across multiple fronts.

He excelled in tennis, rising to become both a champion and captain, commanding respect with racket in hand just as he later would with bat and ball.

In the pool, he was equally accomplished, captaining Australia House at King's College Budo (KCB) in swimming and earning school honours through consistency and leadership.

Football, too, formed part of his sporting DNA, adding to a well-rounded athletic upbringing that few of his generation could rival.

Yet beyond the physical, there was rhythm and calm. As a school chapel pianist, Sempebwa displayed a quieter, more reflective side - one that balanced the intensity of sport with discipline of mind and soul.

From the structured environment of KCB to the refined sporting culture of Sevenoaks School in the United Kingdom, his foundation was built on versatility, excellence, and character - traits that would later define not just the cricketer, but the man.

Kenya chapter

As his game matured, so too did his horizons. Between 1976 and 1986, ESB extended his influence in Kenya, playing for Wanderers, Impala, and Africa Cricket Club (ACC) in Uganda earlier.

There, he shared dressing rooms with some of East Africa's finest like Kenneth Odumbe, Dan Kigozi, Daudi Golooba, James Shikuku, Derek Pringle and Robbie Armstrong, contributing to the region's cricketing evolution.

Even in celebration, ESB looked forward. "You see how our young players are developing. The future is bright," he opined. He singled out players like Simon Ssesazi and Ronald Lutaaya as torchbearers.

As the sun dipped over Lugogo, laughter echoed, stories flowed, and friendships rekindled.

Walking stick in hand, ESB remained at the centre - joking, smiling, and reliving moments that spanned generations. Age may have slowed his stride, but not his spirit - certainly.

The jolly-good day was more than a tribute. It was a mixture of simplicity and why cricket is played. One big plain reminder: Greatness is not always loud. Sometimes, it simply endures.