

Issue 2 June 2023

CHAMPIONS

MAGAZINE

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URC * NETBALL WORLD CUP 2023 * COMRADES * PLETT CAMINO

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MUNSTER SCORE LATE TRY TO SNATCH TITLE IN CAPE TOWN

Munster earned their first Vodacom United Rugby Championship title since 2011 in front of a record crowd of over 56 300 fans as they scored a late try to deny hosts, the DHL Stormers, their second title in a row, thanks to a narrow 19-14 victory in an intense Grand Final in Cape Town on Saturday night.



The first half at the DHL Stadium proved to be a hard grind as Munster dominated possession and territory and applied pressure on the DHL Stormers on attack, but the home side stood their ground for most of the first stanza, as they conceded two tries and scored one to trail 12-7 at the break.

The second half was equally tense, but Munster's two tries to one by the Cape side saw them complete a fairy-tale season by winning all their playoff matches away from home to earn the title.

DHL Stormers flyhalf Manie Libbok earned the hosts the first points of the match in the sixth minute as he scooped an intercept from a forward pass by Munster to dash to the tryline and he added the extra two to hand the team a 7-0 lead.

....<https://www.springboks.rugby/news-features/articles/2023/05/27/munster-score-late-try-to-snatch-vodacom-urc-title-in-cape-town...>

Munster struck back five minutes later with hooker Diarmuid Barron scoring a try from a rolling maul after being awarded a penalty after an earlier attempt at the tryline, and with the kick at goal proving unsuccessful they trailed 7-5.

The Capetonians were dealt a big blow in the 19th minute as No 8 Evan Roos received a yellow card for an off-side infringement, which resulted in them having to play with 14 men for the next 10 minutes.

Munster threatened thrice on attack in the proceeding minutes, and failed to score due to a double movement, knocked on and forward pass respectively, but their efforts finally paid off in the 29th minute as wing Calvin Nash gathered a well-timed cross kick by flyhalf Jack Crowley and cruised over the chalk, and the successful conversion pushed them 12-7 ahead.

URC FINAL CAPE TOWN 27 MAY 2023

With Munster dominating territory and possession and neither team able to add to the score before the break, the Irish team entered the break holding a narrow five-point lead.

Libbok had an opportunity to extend their lead in the 43rd minute, but his penalty goal attempt went wayward. The hosts threatened to score in the 48th minute but Libbok knocked on the ball in contact and Munster gained possession, which denied them from adding to their score. Munster found themselves a man down in the 48th minute as fullback Mike Haley received a yellow card for a late off-the-ball tackle, and the DHL Stormers took full advantage of the extra man as flanker Deon Fourie crashed over the tryline from a maul five metres out. Libbok added the conversion to hand the hosts a 14-12 lead.

Munster had a chance to kick at goal in the 57th minute and opted to kick for touch, but they were shut out by the determined DHL Stormers defence.

Flanker John Hodnett, however, made sure that the team had the advantage on the scoreboard as he scored a try in the 76th minute after they spread the ball wide. Crowley slotted the conversion to hand the visitors a 19-14 lead with three minutes left to play, and despite Munster receiving a yellow card 79th minute as Crowley received his marching orders for foul play, they managed to hang onto the lead and seal the important victory for the team.



SIYA 'ON TRACK' FOR WORLD CUP

The Springboks made the big switch to Test mode on Wednesday, as they returned to the training field in Durban at the first of two preparation camps to kick into gear for the international season.

This camp, which includes 15 players, concludes today (Friday) while the second preparation camp – which will feature players from the Stormers, who lost in their match against Munster in the United Rugby Championship Grand Final in Cape Town on May 27th 2023

The group of players – which includes centre Lukhanyo Am, wing Makazole Mapimpi, hooker Bongi Mbonambi, utility forward Albertus Smith and fullback Willie le Roux – assembled in Durban on Tuesday and got straight into the swing of things on Wednesday with field training sessions, gym, and team meetings.

They had a further two field training sessions on Thursday and one on Friday before returning home. “It was fantastic to see how excited the players and members of team management were to return to the national set-up when we arrived in Durban,” said Springbok coach Jacques Nienaber.

“This is a massive season for us and judging by the players’ enthusiasm to get back to the training field, we are excited about the journey ahead as we prepare for the Rugby Championship, our World Cup warm-up matches and the international showpiece in France.

“With these players having completed their franchise and club commitments, they can now turn their attention fully to the international season.”

Nienaber added: “We have a small group of players at this camp, but this affords us the luxury of giving them special attention. As we said at our first training camp in February, every minute with the players is crucial for us to get our structures and systems in place to ensure that we peak at the right time during the World Cup.

“We’ll have a bigger group of players at the next camp and at our Rugby Championship training camp in June, but this week will assist us greatly in putting the groundwork in place. “Having a few injured players here such as Siyamthanda [Kolisi] and Eben [Etzebeth] is also a bonus, as they’ll participate in all our team meetings, while our medical team have already started working with them.”



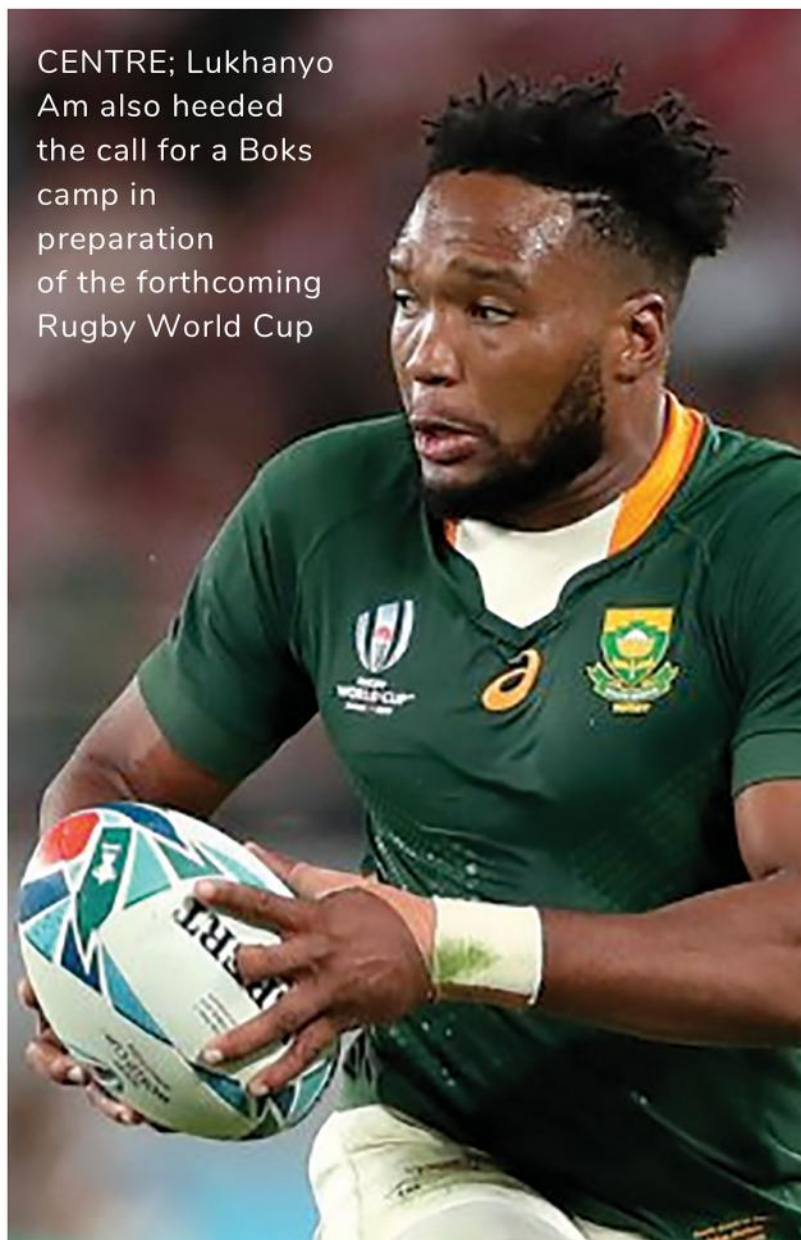
RECOVERY: Kolisi now in race against time to prove fitness in bid to help South Africa defend Webb Ellis Cup in less than four months

Meanwhile a full-house awaits the Boks when the meet Australia at Loftus Versfeld on July 8.

“To see the ‘sold out’ signs go up two months before the Test, is very exciting for SA Rugby and the Springboks, and we are grateful to see the support for the team as we start our preparations for the Rugby World Cup in France later this year,” said SA Rugby CEO Rian Oberholzer.

“Our slogan for the last few years has been #StrongerTogether, and this excitement ahead of the international season certainly sets the tone for the rest of the year.”

CENTRE; Lukhanyo Am also heeded the call for a Boks camp in preparation of the forthcoming Rugby World Cup



By Sports Reporter
<https://weeklysamirror.news/siya-on-track-for-world-cup/>



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SPRINGBOK RUGBY

LIVE UPDATES: SPRINGBOKS' ROAD TO THE RUGBY WORLD CUP

The Springboks management named a new 33-man squad for their second preparation camp in Durban this coming week. Here is a complete list of KEY players who were not selected.

Soon after the URC Grand Final between the Stormers and Munster in Cape Town on Saturday, the SA Rugby unveiled a 33-man Springbok squad that will assemble in Durban on Monday, 29 May for a training camp.

WHO'S IN AND WHO'S OUT

While there were no real shock inclusions, there were quite a few notable omissions of current Test players, some of who ought to be crucial to the Springboks' World Cup defence.

All of Frans Steyn, Elrigh Louw, Handre Pollard, Jasper Wiese, Cheslin Kolbe, Vincent Koch, Trevor Nyakane, Warrick Gelant and Salmaan Moerat missed out this time around.

Much like Siya Kolisi and Jaden Hendrikse, Steyn and Moerat are nursing injuries. But while both Kolisi and Hendrikse were invited to camp, Steyn and Moerat were not as lucky.

That would indicate Steyn and Moerat's respective recoveries from knee surgery (both) are not as clear cut as that their peers.

The only other player on the list that plays locally is Louw. He is currently turning out for the Bulls in the Currie Cup and was not invited back into camp.

The rest of the players are all overseas-based.

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Join Boksquad now!**

Kolbe, Koch, Nyakane and Galant are plying their trade in the Top 14 in France. The French league is still ongoing, meaning they'll link up with the Springbok squad much later.

Pollard, who is injured, and Wiese both play for the Leicester Tigers in recently completed English Premiership, but the duo has not been released to the Springbok fray as English club are not obligated to do so outside of the official Test window as sanction by World Rugby.

ALSO READ: *Springboks name 33-man squad for prep camp*

SPRINGBOKS TRAINING SQUAD:

Props: Thomas du Toit (Sharks), Steven Kitshoff (Stormers), Frans Malherbe (Stormers), Ox Nche (Sharks).

Hookers: Joseph Dweba (Stormers), Malcom Marx (Spears), Bongsi Mbonambi (Sharks).

Locks: Lood de Jager (Wild Knights), Eben Etzebeth (Sharks), Marvin Orié (Stormers), RG Snyman (Munster).

Loose forwards: Pieter-Steph du Toit (Toyota Verblitz), Siya Kolisi (Sharks), Evan Roos (Stormers), Kwagga Smith (Shizuoka Blue Revs), Marco van Staden (Bulls), Duane Vermeulen (Ulster).

Utility Forwards: Deon Fourie (Stormers), Franco Mostert (Honda Heat).

Scrumhalves: Faf de Klerk (Canon Eagles), Jaden Hendrikse (Sharks), Herschel Jantjies (Stormers), Cobus Reinach (Montpellier), Grant Williams (Sharks).

Flyhalves: Manie Libbok (Stormers), Damian Willemse (Stormers).

Centres: Lukhanyo Am (Sharks), Damian de Allende (Wild Knights), Jesse Kriel (Canon Eagles).

Outside Backs: Kurt-Lee Arendse (Bulls), Willie le Roux (Toyota Verblitz), Makazole Mapimpi (Sharks), Canan Moodie (Bulls).





PORK T-BONE STEAK WITH SRIRACHA-FLAVOURED BUTTER

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large pork T-bone steaks, rind removed
- a splash of olive oil

DRY RUB

- 5ml coriander seeds
- 3 ml fennel seeds
- 3ml whole peppercorns
- a sprig of each thyme and rosemary leaf stripped
- 1 bay leaf, broken into pieces
- 3ml smoked paprika
- 5ml light brown sugar
- 30ml Maldon Sea Salt

FLAVOURED BUTTER

- 125ml salted butter, softened
- 60ml flat-leaf parsley (combine with soft herbs from your garden; fennel fronds, basil and coriander are delicious), roughly chopped
- zest of 1 lemon
- 1 generous dollop of sriracha or your favourite hot sauce

1. Make the dry rub by pounding the spices and herbs together in a pestle and mortar. Add the paprika, sugar and salt and mix until it's combined but still retains s
2. Rub the meat with the flavoured salt on both sides and refrigerate, open, for about 1 hour. This allows the surface of the steak to dry.
3. Mix all the ingredients until well combined to make the flavoured butter. If you like, add a bit more spice to taste. Garlic and onion powder are optional extras. Scrape all the flavoured butter onto a baking paper (or clingwrap) sheet and shape it into a neat roll. Refrigerate until needed.
4. To prepare the steaks, you will need hot coals. Make sure you light a generous fire so you have enough heat to finish the job. Secondly, bring the steaks back to room temperature before cooking them.
5. Braai the steaks, turning every minute until a beautiful, seared crust forms (about 3–4 minutes per side, depending on the thickness of your steaks).
6. Remove from the heat and place a cast-iron pan on the grid to heat up. Add a generous dash of olive oil (this keeps the butter from burning), and then add a slice of flavoured butter to the pan. Once melted, put the steaks into the butter and finish cooking, basting with the flavoured butter. Allow to rest for another 3 minutes off the heat before serving with your favourite sides and an extra slice of flavoured butter.



MICHAEL (MUIS) ROBERTS

SON OF AFRICA



This article was first penned in 2007 but has been updated a couple of times since. (Turftalk.co.za)

THE legendary Michael Roberts was an eleven-time South African Champion jockey and one of the few foreigners to ever win the British championship. He revealed his philosophies on race riding.



He said, "What the public see as bad riding is often instructions. If nobody gave instructions nine out of 10 rides would be better ones."

He went on to explain that the "pace is what it's all about and the first 50 metres of a race are in fact the most important."

It is in this narrow window that the jockey must make the split second decision to be up near the front or to drop in behind. The start of any race is thus all important and Roberts said good jockeys were often able to anticipate the gates opening as most starters go through a certain routine before pressing the button.

A smack on the shoulder helps a horse get going but rousing it could be risky because the horse's head would have been in the 'V' of the gates a split-second earlier and he/she might bounce back at you.

Steve Cauthen was the best exponent of a fast start that Roberts knew. He used to grab the bars and shift the horse from side to side to wake him/her up before the off. However, Roberts pointed out that a slow start was sometimes advantageous, especially in a distance race, as this usually meant a horse would settle immediately. "You need to find a happy medium between a good break and settling."

In order to miss the break by half-a-length or so a jockey should just sit very quietly or, in the case of a problematically quick starter, his/her head can just be put slightly to one side.

Nothing annoys Roberts more than a rider who does not commit quickly enough and then spends much of the race looking around looking for a gap to slot into. He said looking around unbalanced the horse and exacerbated the problem.

Roberts has never liked stereotype jockeys who lie handy in every race, as this indicates a lack of pace judgement. However, he added some top jockeys in South Africa were being gifted races by being allowed to dictate the pace without being taken on.

"The easiest races to win are the ones from the front unless you are taken on because horses can cut each other's throats if vying for the lead."

He acknowledged the like of Pieter Strydom as an excellent judge of pace, but rated Lester Piggot by far the best tactician of all time.

Roberts continued, "I would rather drop back three lengths and get on to the fence than race three wide."

Roberts explained horses were able to sense a jockey's mood and this is why some hot horses would relax under certain riders. He added while it was easier to control a horse on a short rein, a horse would tend to be more relaxed on a long rein. A nervous rider might snatch up the rein for more control and the horse, sensing the panic, would begin fighting.

He cited the late Johnny McCreedy as an absolute master of long-rein riding together with Lester Piggot and Ireland's Pat Eddery. Jeff Lloyd was also able to control a fighting horse on a long rein, something that would normally tire a jockey out.

Some modern jockeys have begun wrapping the rein around all four fingers, rather than the traditional stronger hold with the first three, because the more sensitive small finger then takes the weight and this gives more feel overall.

Roberts said the best analogy to use in explaining race riding was to compare it to traffic. Some drivers are prepared to sit and wait whilst others will spot a nice run down the inside lane – except that there is a bus 100m further on. "You often have to gamble," he says, "but the best jockeys make qualified gambles."

His judge of a good jockey "is one who is in the right place at the right time and wins races he shouldn't have won."





ABOVE: Early morning training for Herman with Michael Roberts and Sun Monarch.

“ **MICHAEL ROBERTS WAS MY APPRENTICE JOCKEY FOR FIVE YEARS AND WITH BASIL MARCUS, WERE THE BEST THAT RODE FOR ME (HERMAN)** ”

The whip is an important part of the finish. Roberts usually gave a horse a few light taps to test the response and if it was positive he would whip more freely but would otherwise use it sparingly or not at all. Fillies often don't take kindly to the whip.

The whip hand should be changed if a horse begins hanging or floundering. In the latter case a horse will often change legs and find another gear.

In a tight finish, the jockey should attempt to have the horse's head down on the line, and jockeys have different styles in achieving this.

Roberts said in summing up that it should be imagined a horse was given X amount of petrol to get from A to B and it was the jockey job's to use it in the most economical way so there would be some left for the all important final burst. Roberts has generally discussed the basics in this article but he took race-riding to a whole new level and was famous for outsmarting his rival jockeys.



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EVERYTHING STARTS WITH THE MARULA FRUIT

There is just one place on earth where the Marula trees grow – across Africa's subequatorial plains. And there is just one time of year when the Marula trees bear their exotic fruit – at the height of our beautiful summer.

The size of small plums but oval in shape, the Marula fruit ripens to a rich yellow, with a tough outer skin surrounding its fibrous, white flesh. Containing four times more vitamin C than the average orange, Marula is a succulent fruit with a citrus tang and a creamy, nutty taste.

Archaeological evidence of Marula fruit can be dated back as far as 10 000 BC with traces of Marula kernels found in the ancient Pomongwe Cave of Zimbabwe. The smooth, light brown seed inside each Marula fruit protects its oil-rich kernels which are an essential source of nutrition and have anti-oxidant as well as moisturising properties.

THE AFRICAN LEGEND

Storytelling has always been central to African life. The Marula tree, as the source of several fascinating legends, has become a sacred and intricate part of ancient African culture. Locals have revered these trees for centuries and refer to them fondly by various names.

Because elephants travel for miles to feast on the wild fruit, locals call it 'The Elephant Tree'. African folklore also refers to it as 'The Marriage Tree'. Apart from making a beautifully natural wedding canopy, it's also said to have aphrodisiac properties and features in tribal fertility rites. The ripening of the Marula fruit in summer coincides with great celebrations in many parts of Southern Africa. In Swaziland, for example, the annual Marula Festival is celebrated at the king's royal residence, sustaining the belief that the Marula fruit is fit for kings and queens.

Like the elephants, the Marula trees are protected under South African law. They are a key part of African heritage and may not be farmed for commerce. The fruit however is sold in a variety of natural products, Amarula of course being one of them



INGREDIENTS

- 30 ml Amarula Cream
- 15 ml Gordon's London Dry Gin
- 1.5 ml bitters
- Lemon zest
- Ice cubes

Add the Amarula Cream, gin and bitters to a cocktail shaker, blender or sealed container and insert a few ice cubes.

Mix well, pour into a martini glass and garnish with a twist of lemon zest.

To cool the glass ahead of time, fill with ice cubes and remove before pouring in the cocktail mixture.



Manchester City players celebrate with the trophy after winning the FA Cup
REUTERS/Carl Recine

LONDON, June 3 (Reuters) - Manchester City moved to within one victory of completing a momentous treble as they deservedly beat arch-rivals Manchester United 2-1 in the FA Cup final thanks to Ilkay Gundogan's record-breaking double on Saturday.

City captain Gundogan scored the fastest goal in FA Cup final history with a stunning volley after 12 seconds and struck what proved to be the winner seven minutes after halftime.

In doing so the 32-year-old, who is expected to leave City in the summer after seven trophy-laden years, became the oldest player to score an FA Cup final brace since Nat Lofthouse for Bolton Wanderers in 1958, also against United.

United, seeking to win both domestic cups in the same season for the first time in their history and wreck City's hopes of emulating their own historic 1999 treble, had levelled with a 33rd-minute Bruno Fernandes penalty.

Pep Guardiola's side resisted some late United pressure to win the trophy for a seventh time.

Manchester City's Ilkay Gundogan celebrates scoring their first goal
Action Images via Reuters/Paul Childs



16.

It is the 13th time the English league and FA Cup double has been achieved. But City now want more and travel to Istanbul to face Inter Milan seeking to be crowned European champions for the first time and to equal United's 1998-99 Premier League/FA Cup/Champions League sweep under Alex Ferguson.

"Now we can talk about the treble,"

Guardiola, who has won 11 trophies since arriving at City in 2016, he said.

"Of course we still have to win the Champions League. We performed so well for our city and our fans. It was so important for us today. The FA Cup is so nice."

BRAGGING RIGHTS

For the first time in 190 meetings the clubs were clashing for silverware, and not just bragging rights, and Wembley was decked in red and sky blue as fans braved rail strikes to descend en masse on the capital. Smoke from the pre-match pyrotechnics had not even cleared when City took the lead in spectacular fashion.

Keeper Stefan Ortega's long punt towards Erling Haaland and as the ball bounced into the path of Gundogan who did not hesitate to send a dipping right-foot volley arcing over a transfixed David de Gea.

"The ball just was placed amazingly for me and I just had to hit it," he said. "Obviously it was quite a good strike and it went in and it was amazing."

It eclipsed the previous fastest FA Cup final goal scored by Louis Saha after 25 seconds for Everton against Chelsea in 2009 and City threatened to run riot against a stunned United.

Rodri and Jack Grealish both failed to convert good chances in the opening five minutes in which United barely touched the ball while Haaland and Kevin de Bruyne also went close for City before United were handed an unexpected gift.

[Click here to see the fastest ever FA Cup Goal](#)



Manchester City's Calvin Phillips celebrates with the trophy alongside teammates after winning the FA Cup Action Images via Reuters/Paul Childs

United right back Aaron Wan-Bissaka headed a diagonal ball harmlessly across the area and as play continued referee Paul Tierney was instructed to check a pitch-side VAR monitor for a possible handball by Grealish.

It was extremely harsh on Grealish, but Tierney pointed to the spot and Fernandes calmly shuffled up to send Ortega the wrong way with his penalty and spark celebrations at the east end of the stadium where United's fans were packed.

Briefly United looked City's match and Raphael Varane volleyed over from a corner as halftime approached.

But it proved an illusion. City needed slightly longer in the second half to re-establish their superiority and again it was Gundogan displaying his knack of scoring crucial goals.

This time he was picked out by De Bruyne's chipped pass and his left-foot volley, not struck anywhere near as perfectly as his earlier effort, bounced its way through a crowded area and crept inside De Gea's right-hand post.

Gundogan was denied a hat-trick by an offside flag and as the minutes ticked down City looked edgy with United substitute Alejandro Garnacho curling a shot agonisingly wide and a crazy goalmouth scramble in stoppage time ended with the ball bouncing off City's crossbar.

For United they can console themselves with a League Cup trophy in manager Erik Ten Hag's encouraging first season and will hope Inter can stop City next Saturday.

Reporting by Martyn Herman, editing by Pritha Sarkar

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**Sky Villa • Wednesday 28 June 2023
6pm welcome drinks & snacks**

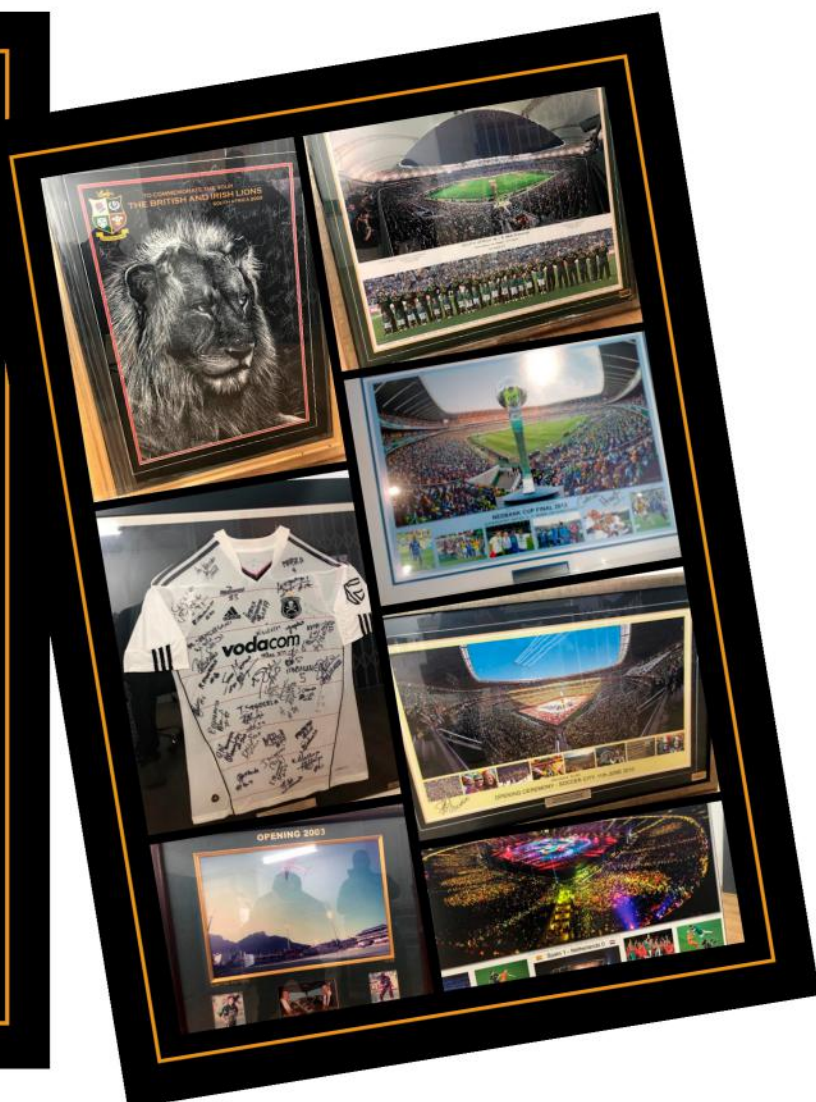
Auction starts at 7pm

Option to enjoy dinner specials with the Plett FC executives and members after the auction, at everyone's own expense, at 8pm.

Auction to be conducted by Gus Bonini



For more info and bookings, contact
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ONE RUN

COMRADES MARATHON

June 10 2023

It is not too late to read this. One, or all of them, might just make the difference on race day.

The stage is set:

- **You've been training for weeks.**
- **You've gradually increased the distance of your long runs.**
- **You've paid special attention to recovery days.**
- **You've monitored your fluid balance on an almost hourly basis.**
- **What more can you do to make sure you're fully prepared for that upcoming marathon?**
- **Well, quite a few things actually. A long marathon distance is way too vast to master with just a few basics. You need sophisticated strategies and a few marathon secrets from marathon veterans with years of experience.**

To help you enjoy your best possible marathon a group of marathon experts were consulted to share their marathon wisdom.



1. Train, train, train

You don't get to test yourself at the ultra-marathon distance as often as you do at for instance a 10 km race. But you can do plenty of homework. Make sure you log five or six to 3-4 hour runs (one every other weekend, at most) in the three or four months before your race. And schedule your last long run at least two weeks before the big day.

2. Do your course work.

It is important to study the race and do your homework. If possible, order a video of the race. Talk to people who've run it. When you're in Durban, drive the course. Cover every metre, from start to finish, at least once, noting landmarks and difficult sections so you can visualise your race in detail before you start the race.

3. Balance your fluid intake

Specialists recommend drinking lots of fluids before and during a race. They maintain, however, that thirst should be your guide. This usually means you should drink between 400-800 ml per hour, depending on the conditions of the day. Remember that overhydration can be just as dangerous as dehydration. It is interesting to note that a greater fluid intake doesn't necessarily translate into better performance. In a study conducted by the University of Cape Town it was found that top Ironman athletes were the most dehydrated participants.

4. Taper your to-do list.

Of course you're training less the week before the race, but that doesn't mean you should fill your free time with other daily chores. Don't clean the garage. Don't even arrange your books. Just sit back, relax and focus on the only task that counts: replacing your heavy training with some very heavy rest.

5. Race in your training shoes.

Your body learns what you teach it: no more, no less. So, if you wear training shoes during your long runs, your body grows accustomed to running for hours on end in those training shoes. Bottom line: If you wear trainers to train, wear them in the marathon. At most, you can gamble with lightweight trainers, but only if you've worn them on several long runs without a problem.

6. Avoid the shock of the new.

You want to be "in a rut" on race day. That means wearing not just the same shoes, but also the same socks, shorts and shirt you've worn without a hitch on your long runs. (Obviously out of the wash!) And it means eating the same foods and drinking the same fluids you did prior to and during your most successful long runs.

7. Prime the sponge.

That is, drink two 225 ml glasses of water or sports drink exactly 2 hours before the gun. The water will have passed through your system by that time and, even better, your body will be primed to accept the fluids you drink during the race.



8. Eat before you run.

Take in at least 300 calories, preferably a full breakfast, an hour before the start. It doesn't matter what you eat (yoghurt, an energy bar, eggs) as long as you've practised eating the same foods an hour before your long training runs, and you know your stomach can handle them. This pre-race meal will prevent your blood sugar from dropping and will fend off hunger later in the race.

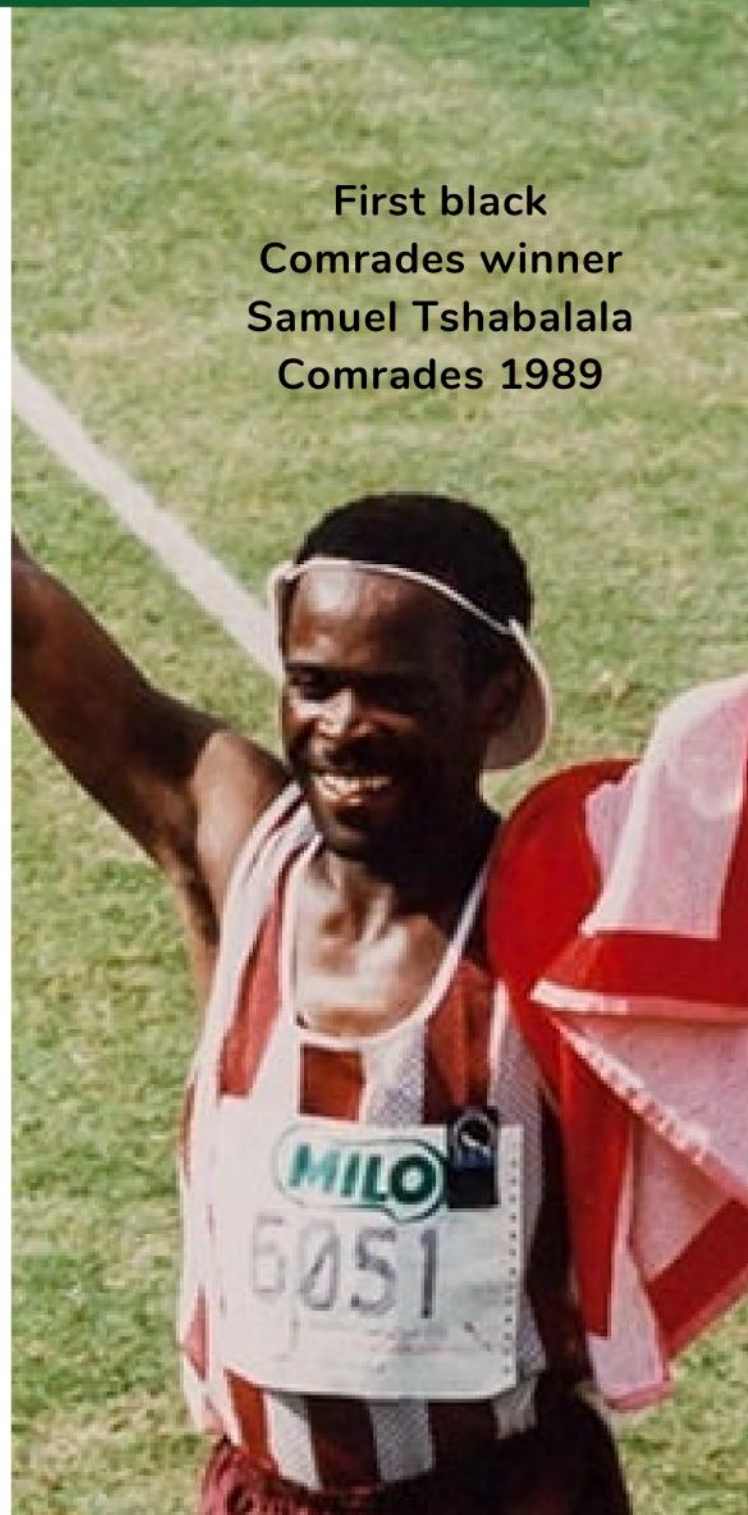
9. Warm up - but don't wear yourself out.

Be a minimalist. At most, jog very easily for about 15 minutes, then stretch your hamstrings, quadriceps, calves and lower back for another quarter of an hour. With about 15 minutes to go before the start, do a few strides if you want. But no more! You'll warm up enough in the early stages of the race.

10. Find your pace-then pull back.

You know how 8:30s feel in training. But do you know how they feel when your heart's pounding louder than the enthusiastic crowd along the road. In fact, thanks to race-day adrenaline rush, any pace will feel far easier than normal, which could mean you'll go out too fast. So make a conscious effort to pull back until you hit the 10-mile mark. Remember, any seconds you lose early on are minutes you save later in the race.

**First black
Comrades winner
Samuel Tshabalala
Comrades 1989**



**Read more:
Comrades: The survival guide**



SPAR Proteas Squad: Pictured is the selected SPAR Proteas players to represent South Africa at the 2023 Vitality Netball World Cup, from back (left) Nicola Smith, Phumza Maweni, Elmere van der Berg, Jeante Strydom, Izette Griesel, Lefebre Rademan, front (left) Owethu Ngubane, Khanyisa Chawane, Bongwiwe Msomi (captain), Nichole Taljaard and Refiloe Nketsa. The 2023 Vitality Netball World starts on the 28th of July - 6th August 2023 and will be played at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC). Picture Credit David Rantho

Tickets available on
<https://nwc2023.org.za/tickets/buy-your-tickets-here/>

Randburg, South Africa – With just 69 days to go before the start of the 2023 Vitality Netball World Cup taking place in Cape Town, Netball South Africa (NSA) confirmed the fifteen-player squad that will represent South Africa at the first ever African stage Netball World Cup.

SPAR Proteas Head Coach Norma Plummer has been in camp with a group of South African based players who are on a four-week hiatus break from the Telkom Netball League. All the overseas based players were not part of this camp due to commitments in their respect leagues abroad.

NETBALL WORLD CUP 2023



The team assembled at the Stellenbosch Academy of Sports (SAS) which has been their training base since 2022 on the 7th of May 2023 and have worked very closely with the Australian mentor for her to finally select her team.

Plummer will lead her South African charges to their second successive World Cup after doing so again back in 2019. She believes that she has selected the best players to represent South Africa.

“We have been in camp since May 7th, and I believe that we have worked very hard with the players at our disposal. We have had some technical and tactical aspects of the game put to the players and at their game. We manage to get some practice matches as well so that, we are sure. We have chosen the best 15 players (12 traveling and 3 reserves) which we believe are the best options,” said Norma Plummer, SPAR Proteas Head Coach.

The players will return to their respective domestic and provincial teams for the remainder of the league that ends on the 1st of July 2023. They will meet again in Stellenbosch for the final stretch of the World Cup preparations.

“As a federation, we have given Coach Norma and management team all the support they needed in preparing the best team for the World Cup. This will be for the first time in sixty years that a Netball World Cup is hosted on African soil, therefore our expectation for podium finish as hosts is a fair one. We can't host and become spectators in our own backyard – we need to make sure that South Africa and other African countries make it to the podium come 6th August 2023,” said Cecilia Molokwane, Netball South Africa President.

The players selected to don the green and gold for South Africa during the 2023 Vitality Netball World Cup and represent the country are:

Bongiwe Msomi (captain); Karla Pretorius (vice-captain); Khanyisa Chawane; Izette Griesel; Owethu Ngubane; Refiloe Nketsa; Phumza Maweni; Lenize Potgieter; Lefebvre Rademan; Nicola Smith; Jeante Strydom; Nichole Taljaard; Elmere van der Berg; Shadine van der Merwe, Ine-Mari Venter

“We have spoken to the players and team at large about the importance of this world cup and what we expect of them without applying any pressure on them. From Netball South Africa, we are pleased with the selected players, and we know for sure that they will do well. We are throwing all the much-needed support to the team, and we have full confidence in that and what they can deliver for us. This is their one chance to write their names in the history books,” conclude Molokwane.

The 2023 Vitality Netball World starts on the 28th of July till 6th August 2023 and will be played at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), and all matches will be broadcast on both free to air SABC and pay TV channel Supersport.





LOOKING BEYOND THE NETBALL WORLD CUP

As the country urges our national netball team to be merciless in the 2023 World Cup, officials are on the other hand asked to also thoroughly plan about the future of this sport thereafter.

This comes from, among the others, one of the legends of the game Hazel "Special" Gumede a 2007 G-Sport hall of fame inductee.

Netball having been introduced to the world in 1892 it only came to our shores 1925, needless to say and for that matter being exposed to whites only due to the racist laws of the day.

By Molefi Mika



THURSDAY, 25 MAY 2023
NETBALL WORLD CUP TROPHY
LANDS ON AFRICAN SOIL



However, sport boycotts initiated by the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania and the African National Congress and supported by some human-right groupings, among other things, resulted in apartheid South Africa barred from international competitions until after 1992.

And as that was the case, girls at some black schools were made to take part in some sport called “basketball” which was more about jumping around, unlike netball it allowed contact.

World Cup competitions in netball, then simply referred to as Netball World Championships, were introduced in 1963. Australians seemed more prepared for them as they turned them into their staple food by winning 11 titles while their neighbour New Zealand (NZ) scooped it five times, the lesser fancied Trinidad and Tobago squad claimed it once.

It can't therefore be surprising to see the Oceania countries ranked thus in the Top 10: 1 – Australia, 2- NZ, 3 – England, 4 – Jamaica, 5 – SA, 6 – Malawi, 7 – Tonga, 8 – Uganda, 9 – Wales, 10 – Scotland.

Said Gumede: “My best wishes go to Netball South Africa (NSA) in this World Cup, regarding the smooth running of the event and also our team doing its best regardless of the known dominance of certain countries.

It may be wishful thinking on my part but I fancy them (the squad) to move from the fifth spot to second afterwards.”

With sports anything is possible, more so with our players playing before packed arenas at home, my personal view, they are likely to be super-charged to ravage the “enemy”.

In captain Bongiwe Msomi they have one of the most resilient players in the game of netball and her leadership quality has been remarkable to date. we also wish and hope that her teammates would also go out there all guns blazing to set the terraces aflame with excitement.

Former NSA president, Muditambi “Ntambi” Ravele, said: “We wish our girls to go all the way in this World Cup. It has also been impressive to see the coverage of local netball on TV but I wish that could also be extended by showing what's happening in the townships where facilities are still a problem.

“There is a possibility that it would be more amazing if people were able to see players from their neighbourhood given a chance with such an exposure to emulate their idols in the national team, and this has a potential to also attract more sponsors.



Vitality NETBALL WORLD CUP CAPE TOWN 2023

The issue of a lack of recreational and sports facilities in many townships is quite a head-ache for many, this including people who don't want this to be more of a Government problem when they could also help.

Out in Katlehong, Ekurhuleni they have a youth club aimed at giving local kids some positiveness and hope in their approach to life. The two-year-old plus Phake Youth Club (PYC) caters for sports that include netball, soccer and there are plans to add other codes, it also has a book club. PYC which has its own leaders (officials) who run the club is also guided by a team of volunteering patrons who assist with fundraising projects that helped stage three annual tournaments this far: Boys Under-17 (soccer), girls' netball tourney and for Under-19s (boys' soccer).

Says Dikeledi Kekana, secretary of PYC: "Like all South Africans we are fully behind our girls in this coming World Cup, and our appreciation also go to the president of NSA, Cecilia Molokwane and her team for their sterling job.

"We really also hope that when the world cup is over NSA will visit some of the townships where netball is being played, this in order to see the struggle people have in an effort to keep kids busy, but fail due to lack of facilities."

Gumede adds that unlike before when netball players were recruited at schools by local teams as was the case in football, lately that's not happening any more.



The former Young Limited sharp-shooter who along the way collected many awards, was at some stage after being selected into the Transvaal squad only to be dropped without an explanation, sparking off speculation that some officials were uncomfortable in having a black player in their team, has since moved on by staying positive minded.

"I also think we should revive netball in township schools. The department of education can assist by actually hiring netball coaches for schools and offer students bursaries to be in a position to also get a chance to play for teams in big leagues as it happens with university and college students," suggests Gumede who still coaches at one of the schools in Soweto.

Needless to say, NSA together with school sport authorities and of course SASCOC (South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee), need to meet and knock sense into some of the seemingly heartless town councilors who appear to be out there for their personal needs rather than communities they are supposed to serve.

That parked: "Go for it our netball Proteas."



THE PLETT CAMINO

A

fter months of planning, arranging, land access negotiations and trail blazing, the first Plett Camino got underway at the end of April 2023.

Eight hikers met at T’Niqua Stable Inn for drinks and an ostentatious fire cooked dinner before heading to bed to get ready for the next day. Early morning brought the frantic preparations of what to take and what to leave behind, what to carry in your daypack, and what to send with the porters. Its always like that. You think you’re prepared and invariably you’re over prepared. Nothing like a deadline to get you focussed on what is really important.

The first day kicked off at the Harkerville hut and plunged us straight into the dense Knysna forest. Not the usual jeep tracks that the bikers are used to, but lush, moist, leaf covered bush trails, adorned with mushrooms, ferns, rich in bird life and the fresh scat of unseen animals. The smells and sounds of the forest soon mingle with slightly laboured breathing as the trails start pointing up hill.

Fourteen km later we emerged at the oasis of Greenfern lodge for our first night’s stop and were welcomed by ice cold G&T’s around a fresh swimming pool to dangle weary feet into. There were no takers for a swim that day, but this was not to be the case after the very warm day three.

The next day the hikers were baying at the gates to get going, like a pack of wild horses eagerly waiting to be let loose on the track. The trails didn’t disappoint and took us along a virgin section of mountain track which hadn’t seen a vehicle or hiker in years. The smells of a dewy morning intermingled with the slanted rays of the sun streaming through the forest canopy. It felt good to be alive and to be part of this adventure, so far from the office and worldly worries.

At lunch time we happily descended onto the beautiful Packwood Wine Estate where we tasted their whole range of delicious wines and bubbly served with a mouth-watering lunch of homemade cheeses and charcuterie.

And then onward for another hour or so until we emerged at a secret deck overlooking the upper reaches of the Bitou river course. It is said that life is not measured by the number of breaths you take, but by the moments which take your breath away. This was surely one. Amanda from Protea Wilds treated us to a night of wonderful food and lots of mirth as the stories flowed well into the night.



Day three took us on a long fifteen kilometre trail crossing the Bitou valley and up the other side through unspoiled fynbos and the pastures of the Uplands. After collapsing into a cool flowing river, we were surprised with an unexpected picnic stop halfway up the valley. Far in the distance we could see where the Camino would end some two and a half days later. At Bellamanga a welcome pool awaited and weary hikers fell in fully clothed but content.

The Queens stage on Day four had hikers out the gates at 7:15 to meet the game vehicle which traversed us across the Plett Game Reserve in the care of our knowledgeable chaperone, Kiewiet. Plains teeming with animals took one's mind far away to another place elsewhere in Africa, where such sights feel more common place.

“ In the end, it was difficult to remember all the steps it took to get there.... ”

Alighting from the game vehicle we set off downhill towards the Keurbooms river. The declining temperature on the way down reminded one that you were losing altitude fast, and what goes down, must surely come up! Once across the river we headed in search of the bottom of our new trail, fondly named “Postman James” in deference to its original purpose a long time ago, and the Plett Camino trail warrior who found it and cleared it for us.

A stiff and lengthy climb out the valley was just what was needed to get the heart racing. After a well-deserved rest at the top, we set about a fast-paced hike through the forests in search of our next stop at Kay and Monty Vineyards some ten kilometres down the track.

Night five brought with it the joy of Davina and Derek at their 20 Good Summers working farm retreat. Wine and pizzas flowed all night to celebrate that most of the Camino was now behind us. Day five took us back into the forest and along the river course in the direction of the Keurbooms.

An unexpected climb that rivalled Postman James was there to greet us as we ascended from the riverbed in the direction of Fairview Manor, where the promised cappuccinos were quickly substituted for the legendary Fairview Hot Chocolate next to the fire. During the final stretch, the Robberg Peninsula slowly reveals itself as you descend towards the Keurbooms river. The strange thing is that when you left five days earlier, you were looking at it from the other side, and without realizing it, you have come full circle and see it now from the East.

We concluded the Camino with a welcome lunch at Down to Earth restaurant on the Bitou River.

As I sat there gazing over the Botou river, with a burning log fire at my back, the irony of the situation did not escape me, that our seventy five kilometre epic, had taken us from the Garden of Eden five days earlier, all the way back Down to Earth !

At the end, it was difficult to remember all the steps that it took to get there, but as the days and weeks passed, and the photos and stories were shared, so many wonderful memories came flooding back.

The Camino is an experience you wouldn't expect from Plett as so few venture north towards the forests and the mountains. The diversity of trails, views, friendships and experiences along the way, leave you wondering how Plett could be so close, yet feel so far away for five full days.



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GWAVU APPOINTED PROTEAS WHITE-BALL FIELDING COACH

GWAVU APPOINTED PROTEAS WHITE-BALL FIELDING COACH

Posted at 09:33h in [CSA News](#), [Proteas - Men](#) by [admin@csa](#)

JOHANNESBURG: Cricket South Africa (CSA) is pleased to announce that Wandile Gwavu has been appointed the fielding coach for the Proteas white-ball setup.

The 36-year-old, who took charge of the fielding during South Africa's inbound limited-overs tours against West Indies and Netherlands this past summer, joins Rob Walter's team on a full time basis alongside batting coach JP Duminy.

As head coach of DP World Lions since 2019, Gwavu was named Domestic Coach of the Season in his first year in charge and has since led the Highveld team to five titles in four seasons – the most by any Lions coach. He was also assistant coach to both the Jozi Stars (Mzansi Super League) and Joburg Super Kings (Betway SA20) and enjoyed national spells with the SAU19s and SA 'A' side.

Hailing from Cape Town kwa Langa, Gwavu played age-group cricket for Eastern Province and was part of their Academy before he took up coaching. CSA Director of Cricket Enoch Nkwe commented: "We are pleased to confirm Wandile as the fielding coach for the Proteas Men's limited-overs team. He brings a wealth of experience at the highest level in South African cricket with a coaching career that speaks volumes.

"With the fine margins and the ever-increasing stakes in 50-over and T20 cricket, fielding has become a critical part of any successful team and we strongly believe Wandile's expertise will help the Proteas maintain their strong tradition of fielding excellence across both formats.

"Wandile also permanently joins the set-up during an exciting period as the team transition into a crucial preparatory phase ahead of the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in India later this year."



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Chennai pip Gujarat in dramatic final to win fifth IPL title

Reuters

May 29, 2023

NEW DELHI, May 29 (Reuters) - Chennai Super Kings equalled Mumbai Indians' record of five Indian Premier League (IPL) titles after Mahendra Singh Dhoni's side triumphed in a last-ball thriller, beating champions Gujarat Titans by five wickets in Monday's rain-marred final in Ahmedabad.

Put into bat, Gujarat racked up 214-4 after their number three batter Sai Sudharsan capitalised on a strong start and smashed an incendiary 96 off 47 balls that included six sixes.

Chasing a revised target of 171 from 15 overs after a lengthy rain interruption, Chennai survived intense drama before Ravindra Jadeja sealed their victory, milking 10 runs off the last two deliveries.

The final was originally scheduled on Sunday but incessant rain forced the organisers to move the game to its reserve day.

After Chennai skipper Dhoni won the toss and elected to field, Shubman Gill walked out to bat having smashed three hundreds in his last four innings.

The opener seemed to have luck on his side too as Deepak Chahar dropped Gill, the tournament's leading scorer, at square leg when the batter was on three.

Gill also survived a run-out chance when Jadeja could not properly gather the ball before breaking the stumps.

The left-arm spinner, however, made amends in the same over.

Jadeja lured Gill (39) out of the crease and Dhoni proved age has not dulled his reflexes as the 41-year-old whipped off the bails in a flash. Chahar also floored a return catch from Wriddhiman Saha, who smashed 54 before falling to the seamer with Dhoni collecting the top edge.

Sudharsan then tore into the Chennai attack and hit Matheesha Pathirana for back-to-back sixes in the final over of the innings to inch closer to a hundred.

Pathirana denied him the milestone but Gujarat could not be denied a 200-plus total.

Chennai's openers faced three balls before rain forced them off the field and held up play for two hours and 20 minutes.

Chasing a revised target on return, Ruturaj Gaikwad (26) and Devon Conway (47) plundered 72 runs from the first six overs before Noor Ahmad removed both in the seventh over.

Shivam Dube, who made 32 not out, kept Chennai in the race but Mohit Sharma removed Ambati Rayudu and Dhoni in successive deliveries to inject fresh drama into the contest.

Chennai needed 13 runs from the last over from Mohit, who conceded three runs in his first four deliveries.

Needing 10 off the last two, Jadeja hit Mohit over his head for a six and followed it with a boundary to seal a thrilling victory.

"I was just trying to swing hard because every ball was important," Jadeja said of the dramatic last over.

"I knew anything could happen, so I was trying to swing hard and hit it straight."



GRAEME SMITH



Meaty, muscular and mighty, Graeme Smith was a colossus as South Africa's captain, and not much less so in his contribution as a batter, in the first two decades of the 21st century. Smith's leadership and batting were all about being direct and upfront. The subtleties of captaincy grew into his game, but he was generally most comfortable surging once more unto the breach himself with a cursory backward glance to see if his men were following.

His batting was similarly forthright: anything bowled near his pads was sent screaming through midwicket. Anything drivable on the off side was driven, brutally, often inelegantly, but always effectively. Square of jaw and shoulder, they didn't call him "Biff" for nothing.



FULL NAME

Graeme Craig Smith

BORN

February 01, 1981, Johannesburg, Gauteng

AGE

42y 119d

BATTING STYLE

Left hand Bat

BOWLING STYLE

Right arm Offbreak

PLAYING ROLE

Opening Batter

TEAMSSouth Africa
Africa XI

Cape Cobras

Gauteng
Hampshire Cricket Board
ICC World XI

Pune Warriors

Rajasthan Royals

Somerset

Surrey

Western Province

Smith was handed the reins at 22 - which made him his country's youngest captain - and tasked with rebuilding South Africans' faith in the integrity of game itself, which had been shattered by Hansie Cronje's greed and was not restored completely under Shaun Pollock's sincere but undemonstrative leadership. If Pollock was too maturely minded a captain for South African sensibilities, Smith was spot-on: an overgrown schoolyard bully of the nicest possible type, who would just as soon take a (verbal) swing at an opponent as buy him a beer.

The double-centuries he scored in his 11th and 12th Tests (just his third and fourth as captain), in England in 2003 made for an ironclad argument to retain his overtly direct approach to getting the job done. Those were his early days in charge, but arguably his greatest triumph came much later, when he led South Africa to their first Test series victory in Australia, in 2008-09, memorably batting with a broken hand in Sydney.

Under his leadership, South Africa became truly dominant tourists, winning eight away series and losing none between 2007 and 2013. They also went undefeated in 11 series overall between April 2006 and December 2008. He was also the first captain to lead in more than 100 Tests.

Through all his Test triumphs, though, Smith couldn't get his hands on a chunk of ICC silverware. He quit international cricket after a lean series with the bat at home against Australia in March 2014. He went on to serve as Cricket South Africa's director of cricket after retirement, and in 2022 was appointed commissioner of the SA20, South Africa's attempt at a top-tier T20 league.



ICC REVENUE MODEL THREATENS GROWTH OF GAME

NEW DELHI, May 30 (Reuters) - Cricket's cash-starved associate member nations fear the proposed new international revenue distribution model, which heavily favours the game's superpowers, could potentially stall the growth of the game. The International Cricket Council (ICC) has proposed a new revenue sharing model for the 2024-27 cycle to be voted on at its July board meeting in Durban. According to figures leaked to Cricinfo, cricket's financial engine India would alone claim 38.5%, primarily in recognition of its contribution to the commercial revenue pot.

The 12 full members of the ICC would collectively take 88.81% with the rest distributed among 94 associate members. The ICC has not commented on the figures, though general manager Wasim Khan said on Monday all members would get more money under the proposed model than in the past.

Pakistan have already made clear their opposition to the model in its current shape and resentment is rumbling among other, less developed, cricketing nations. Sumod Damodar, one of the three associate member representatives on the ICC Chief Executives' Committee, said the proposal would not meet the needs of associate members.

"If what is being proposed and discussed is likely to be the outcome then, as an associate member representative, I would be (disappointed)," he told Reuters.

"There are numerous practical reasons why it would be inadequate for associate members."

Damodar, vice chairman of Botswana's board, said associate members who have earned one-day international (ODI) status need more money to sustain their high-performance programmes, while the others need cash to bridge the gap. Citing the rapid rise of Nepal in men's cricket and Thailand in the women's game, Damodar said more countries would step up if they were given the required financial support.

Vanuatu Cricket Association Chief Executive Tim Cutler said the proposed model would only accentuate the inequality between cricket's haves and have-nots.

"The new model is now even more heavily weighted towards the bigger cricketing nations, and there is a risk that the proposed changes will exacerbate this imbalance, putting the future of the game at further risk," Cutler told Reuters.

"The sad reality is, cricket will not grow beyond its current corners of the world ... if the allocation of the game's global funds aren't more equally allocated with a view to actually growing the game."

With full members having 12 of the 17 total votes on the ICC board, Cutler said diverting funds away from themselves, or making independent decisions for the good of the game, would be like "turkeys voting for Christmas".

The ICC did not respond to a request for comment when asked about the concerns of the associate members.

'STRONGER AND RICHER'
Former ICC President Ehsan Mani said there was a lack of vision at the governing body in its approach to developing cricketing nations, despite the huge commercial potential of some of them.

"One of the biggest risks for global cricket is its over-dependence on one country, India, for a major part of the revenues generated," the former Pakistan Cricket Board chairman told Reuters.

"Countries like the USA and the Middle East and, in longer term, China would bring enormous benefits to the ICC, its members and the global game. World cricket would be stronger and richer for it." For Mani, India grabbing the lion's share of ICC revenues "makes no sense" and he advocated equal shares for all full members.

"World cricket needs a strong West Indies, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan," he added.

"Cricket in Zimbabwe has suffered due to lack of funds as have Ireland and Afghanistan. Lack of investment in some of these countries will make the game unsustainable and world cricket will be poorer for it."

Reporting by Amlan Chakraborty in New Delhi, editing by Nick Mulvenney and Peter Rutherford



The International Cricket Council (ICC) logo at the ICC headquarters in Dubai, October 31, 2010.
REUTERS/Nikhil Monteiro/File Photo

35.

LAST WORD



That's John : the coach who can bring back the Smiles to Cpt !!

As a last word, I want to talk about Stormers coach John Dobson who understands that instead of using reality negatively, he uses adversity to create purpose.

"I went to the airport early the other day and there was a guy who ran up to me and asked if he could get a lift back to Cape Town," Dobson said.

"He didn't know who I was. And I said, 'no' (Dobson was going in the other direction to Stellenbosch) but I asked, 'what are you doing'?"

"He said he wanted to watch the Stormers on the weekend, and was not taking public transport that week to save the money to buy a ticket for the game.

"So, every day he ran to the airport to find somebody to hitch a ride into town to get to work so he could buy a ticket. That's what we're really playing for. And that's our big 'why'."

In a narrower corridor the Stormers are a team not only living in a tough country, but also existing in a tumultuous period in the club's and union's history.

They almost didn't exist two years ago and they wouldn't have been anyone's pick to somehow be the best team over the past two years in the United Rugby Championship (URC). But they have been the best team, forged like all South Africans, out of difficult circumstances.

The Stormers' revival didn't happen by chance, in the sense that they have worked hard for every success they have enjoyed. But to an extent, there was some luck because in coach Dobson they had the right man, at the right time.

See you on the Sports Grandstands...
Best,
Robin



Before the WPRFU's near collapse, Dobson's team had been middling. Since their very existence balanced on a razor-thin edge, the Stormers have blossomed because in many ways the existential crisis, both within the union and globally due to Covid, gave them purpose. And in Dobson, a former publisher, novelist and natural storyteller, they had a coach who knew how to tap into the angst and chaos. He instinctively knew to make his players understand their privileged position and why they needed to understand that the very city they represent needed their success, more than they did.

As Dobson says, it gave the squad a "why", which was much broader than simply winning rugby games.

"When we sat down towards the end of Covid restrictions and thought about what we're trying to do with the Stormers, we had a simple mission: to get Cape Town smiling again," he said.

"But even then, I didn't think we'd be getting more than 45,000 fans two weeks running, including a game against Connacht, who are not the most well-known team.

"Last year our mission was called Get Cape Town Smiling because it was a start. And this year it was a bit more emphatic – Make Cape Town Smile – and it's all about what we're trying to build.

"Because we know that being in the Western Cape looks like what it means to the people. There is a police commander at the station out in Delft or Blue Downs, I'm not sure which, and he told me that when the Stormers win, gender-based violence drops that night.

"And you can extrapolate that as far as you want. It's helluva powerful.

I mean, those tickets on the western stand were R300. "That's great, I have no issue with price and we filled them up. But if you look at those people who filled them, they're not swanning out of the penthouses in Blouberg or Clifton. They represent our men. They represent our people of Cape Town. "And they're making a sacrifice to come to the game, whether it's not taking their families somewhere or going without some small luxury."

It's clear that the multicultural support the multicultural Stormers team receives is a massive part of their narrative and their purpose. "And our project is to restore Stormers to full pride, to fill up this stadium seven or eight times a year," Dobson said. "And we've probably got there a little bit faster than I thought we would with these back-to-back finals.

"This team, we're different from every other team. We know what the people, the faithful, look like in Cape Town. This team belongs to people across every demographic, every LSM standing, and that's why our connection with them is so important to us.

"It's where we want to be. It's just amazing that a couple of years ago I had to call players to come here. I gave Manie (Libbok) a ring and asked him to please come down to Cape Town and to trust us. He took a leap of faith and hopefully it's paid off.

"Now the phone's ringing because players want to come and play here."



RUGBY

JAMES SMALL



His first Test match in 1992 was the first for the Springboks at the dawn of the new, internationally acceptable South Africa following the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC. He was one of the heroes of the Springbok team that won the 1995 Rugby World Cup and he experienced the transition of rugby from a nominally amateur game to one in which its leading players became wealthy professionals.

"Life is not the easiest thing," Small said in a [particularly revealing podcast](#) interview with former British Lions and Transvaal rugby player John Robbie for The Sport Exchange website.

Small's death, of a suspected heart attack, dominated the front page of Die Burger on Thursday 11 July and was the subject of a full page of articles inside the newspaper, which included tributes from former Springbok teammates, several of whom spoke of a generous nature being an integral part of a complex character.

What is beyond dispute is that Small was an outstanding rugby player. A hard-running, hard-tackling wing, he played in 47 Test matches and scored 20 tries, which was a South African record until it was broken by Joost van der Westhuizen. He died July 10, 2019 (aged 50)

RUGBY

REUBEN KRUGER

Krugger was a tough, committed flanker who helped South Africa to their famous victory at the 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa.



Having made his Test debut in 1993 against Argentina, Kruger was in prime form during the tournament and scored a controversial try in the semi-final victory over France in Durban. In the final he started alongside skipper Francois Pienaar and Mark Andrews in the back-row, beating the All Blacks to claim South Africa's first World Cup title.

At club level he was a servant of Free State and Northern Transvaal, now Blue Bulls, and he retired after the 1999 World Cup following a series of knee injuries.

In 2000 he was diagnosed with cancer after blacking out during a game and fought the disease for a number of years. On 27 January 2010 he died after losing his battle, aged 39

RUGBY

JOOST VAN DER WESTHUIZEN

Regarded as one of the greatest scrum-halves the game has ever seen, Van der Westhuizen was capped a total of 89 times during a 10-year international career and was a key member of the Springboks side that lifted the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

His outstanding service to the Springboks included a total of three Rugby World Cups and he was given the honour of leading his country into the 1999 showpiece. He retired from international rugby as the most capped Springbok of all time - a record that has since been passed by Percy Montgomery, John Smit and Victor Matfield. The no-nonsense No.9 also crossed for a record 38 Test tries in his career - a mark he now shares with winger Bryan Habana.

He played his provincial for the Northern Transvaal, later re-named the Blue Bulls, and captained them to the Currie Cup crown in 1998 and 2002.



He also starred for the Bulls on the Super Rugby stage before a succession of injuries forced him into retirement in the wake of the 2003 World Cup.

He later joined Supersport as a commentator but parted company with the broadcaster after becoming embroiled in a sex and drugs video scandal - a charge he initially denied before confirming in his headline-grabbing autobiography - *The Man in the Mirror*. The scandal would also lead to the breakdown of his high-profile marriage to Afrikaans media personality Amor Vittone.

Van der Westhuizen suffered a suspected heart attack in 2009 and in a further blow to his health he was provisionally diagnosed with motor neurone disease in 2011. He died February 6, 2017, Johannesburg (aged 45 years)

A photograph of a jockey in a red jacket and yellow saddle cloth riding a brown horse during a race. The jockey is wearing a red helmet and sunglasses. The horse is galloping on a grassy track. In the background, another jockey in a blue and yellow jacket is visible on a horse. The sky is blue with white clouds. The text "July Issue...." is overlaid in white at the top left.

July Issue....

**ALL THE ACTION
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AND MORE....!**

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