

UYANDA HLANGABEZO: THE UNDERDOG OF BIG BROTHER



Image Source: Big Brother Naija Daily

By Inathi Memka

When Uyanda Hlangabezo first entered the Big Brother Mzansi House, few predicted he would make it to the finale. Yet, against all odds, he captured viewers' hearts, and finished as the season's runner up. His journey was a testament to resilience, authenticity and strategic gameplay.

Uyanda's rise to fame wasn't just luck, it was about connection. He built strong relationships, entertained audiences, and showcased a personality that resonated with fans. Whether through his wit, emotional depth, or ability to navigate the house's intense dynamics. He carved out a space for himself amongst fierce competitors. While he may not have taken the grand prize, his impact on the show was undeniable. His journey sparks a larger conversation about what it truly means to 'win' on Big Brother Mzansi.

Many runner-ups have gone on to achieve just as much, if not more, success than the winners.

With a growing fanbase, and the spotlight firmly on him, Uyanda now has the platform to shape his own post-Big Brother path. His time in the house has set the stage for exciting opportunities in entertainment, media and brand partnerships.

Uyanda's authenticity and charisma have earned him a loyal fanbase, invested in his next steps. His welcome at the Chief Dawid Stuurman Airport, where a huge crowd waited patiently for hours, was evidence enough that he won the hearts of many viewers.

Finishing second is not a loss; it's a powerful launchpad for a career filled with possibility. Uyanda's journey is far from over, and this is just the beginning of what is to come.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hold on. Before we start, take your trip to the bathroom, grab your water bottle and find a small nook to become comfortable in, because once you start reading, you won't be able to stop!

Welcome to the second edition! The content we have here is so compelling, it's 'unputdownable'. You may notice quite a few new names on our editor list, as well as throughout the sections, which also means fresh, new content!

As always, our goal is to maintain a platform for the students by the students, and the students have outdone themselves! This edition features our most pressing on-campus news, so we can stay in the know as well as our lighter reads, just for relaxation. It features how to deal with university life, self-care methods, recent university news, the ever-evolving transformation and process of AI and social media, the science of things we would never think involve science, as well as our most recent sports news. So... it's jam-packed!

Marking our third academic month, we more or less know what our schedules look like and how to plan them. We have made it this far, and from here, we can only go much further. Please be mindful of yourself, your [mental] health, and time – there are lovely articles in the Lifestyle and Entertainment section to assist. Always put yourself first.

We are so excited to partake in this journey with you, and have some new support staff to help us through it. Please offer our new members a very warm welcome and treat them well. We are so excited to see what content they produce.

We'd love to hear your feedback, so please feel free to reach out via our socials and emails. Your thoughts and contributions make this space more special. See you in the next one! Here's to more meaningful conversations.

Leigh-Nakeetah Jason

PSO SUCCESSFULLY OBSERVES ISRAELI APARTHEID WEEK



By Kate Jennings

Over the past week, visitors to the South Campus library were greeted by a board with the words 'Israeli Apartheid Week' emblazoned across it. Below, were posters describing the ongoing Israeli-led genocide in Palestine; the display featuring an array of books about Palestine's relationship with Israel.

The library display was part of a number of events held globally from 21 March 2025 to 28 March 2025, to mark Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW), an annual commemoration of the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine, including the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which began in 1948.

This year's events at Nelson Mandela University included library displays at both South and Missionvale Campuses, a webinar with Birzeit University in the West Bank, and a screening of Arna's Children.

These events were organized by the Palestine Solidarity Organization (PSO@MandelaUni), which was established in 2022, and aims to

educate students about Israel's Apartheid system, as well as linking the Palestinian struggle to South Africa's own struggle. This was particularly evident at the film screening.

Nelson Mandela University student, Odwa Mdolo said, "The conversation we had afterwards was very interesting as we drew similarities between apartheid Israel and apartheid South Africa."

PSO member Nicole Collier-Naidoo added, "As we learn about how interwoven these two struggles are, we also begin to see how the struggles for freedom of people in the DRC, in Sudan, in Myanmar, and elsewhere, are similarly deeply interwoven with our own".

One of the core-aims of IAW is fostering dialogue around Palestine. The library display achieved just this, as students approached PSO members, either to learn more about Palestine-Israel history and relations or to exchange opinions.

Aside from IAW, the PSO hosts various events throughout the year which are open to students and staff.

DIALOGUE SPARKS CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS ON YOUTH PARTICIPATION



Image Source: IEC IMAGES

By Lesedi Morwe & Cinga Mgandela

The role of the youth in South Africa's democracy has been a hot topic for years, with a recent dialogue hosted by the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) at Nelson Mandela University, shedding light on key issues like youth participation in politics, the struggles of unemployment, and the challenges preventing young people from voting.

South Africa's youth make up a large portion of the population, yet many of them are not

voting. Why? Political disillusionment, lack of trust in leaders, and simply not seeing the point of voting. Some young people feel that their votes won't make a difference, while others just don't have enough information about the importance of elections.

Experts at the dialogue, including political analysts and activists, stressed the need for better civic education. Dr. Siyabulela Mandela pointed out that social media plays a huge role in shaping young people's political views. While it can be a great tool for activism, it also spreads misinformation, which can make people even more sceptical about politics.

Audience members raised questions about e-voting, and the need to modernize elections. Some called for a transition away from manual vote counting. In response, Professor Ntsikelelo Benjamin Breakfast noted that while digital voting could reduce political apathy, it might disadvantage people without digital access.

Mrs. Aviwe Kwitshi-Mambo, a representative of the IEC, discussed voter uncertainty, and the need to understand power distribution in government. She questioned "How do we allocated blame if we don't understand the power allocation in government?", and "If democracy is defined as by the people, for the people, then how can we govern something we have little knowledge about?"

The IEC and political activists are urging the youth to get involved in democracy. The full video of the discussion is available on the IEC Facebook page.

IEC representatives, political activists, Dr Siyabulela Mandela, Prof Ntsikelelo Benjamin Breakfast and Dr Aviwe Kwitshi Mbambo.

TRAGEDY STRIKES TWICE: VIOLENCE PLAGUES UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

By Louisa Mkhabela

A night of celebration quickly turned into a night of condolences and devastating news for Nelson Mandela University, as a Toyota Quantum minibus drove into 11 students at the long-awaited first year's Fresher's Party.

The incident occurred on Sunday, 15 March 2025, resulting in the death of a student, two students in critical condition and others facing devastating injuries. This comes after another shocking incident of violence reported by the EFF Student Command of the stabbing of a student by a shop owner in Korsten the previous day.

24-year-old Sinovuyo Lindi appeared in Port Elizabeth's Magistrate's Court in North End on 17 March 2025 for his bail hearing, postponed to 18 March 2025 following new critical evidence, facing charges of homicide, negligent driving, drunk driving, and attempted murder with a pleading of "not guilty."

The accident resulted in the tragic death of 22-year-old Olwam Tima. Despite the effort of the Student Representative Council's President Lathtitha Mbuzwana's petition for no bail, the accused was awarded bail of R1500 as he is a first-time offender. Lindi will be returning to the stand on 24 June 2025.

Building on the blocks of sorrow, the EFF Student Command led a march in Korsten to demand justice for Vulelani Senosha, who was stabbed after an alleged altercation with a tuckshop owner in the area. The accused's shop was later closed following investigations, and he has since made his first appearance at New Brighton Court.

The university has offered counseling services for all affected students, and the SRC has visited the surviving students in the hospital to offer their support. Additionally, a candlelight vigil was organized by the student representative, and held at the Kraal South Campus, while a joint memorial service was held at the North Campus Auditorium.



Image Source: Kat Wilcox/Pexels

MANDELA UNIVERSITY HOSTS HUGEST HAPPINESS BLANKET UNVEILING



By Vincent Meya

Nelson Mandela University and the 67 Blankets for Mandela Day Movement hosted the unveiling of the world's hugest happiness in celebration of the United Nations International Day of Happiness, held at Second Avenue Campus.

The blankets, knitted by the South African KnitWits, were laid out to reveal the giant smiley face across the campus grounds. "It was particularly meaningful to bring this event to the Eastern Cape, Madiba's birthplace, where his legacy of service and kindness continues to inspire us all." - Carolyn Steyn, founder of the 67 Blankets for Nelson Mandela Day Movement.

Professor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Andre Keet, expressed sentiments of gratitude and awe on the event, saying "This initiative moves beyond traditional community engagement, by creating physical and intellectual spaces where academia, civil society, government and the communities come together to address pressing issues."

Aside from this, young learners from Khulile

Primary School won the t-shirt design competition held by the Movement, being granted the opportunity for inspiration by the beautiful paintings from professional artist Muneeb Wassin. The university choir, the Quintessential Acapella group, Toynbee Ballet Academy and the Lawson Brown Steel Band graced the event with their presence, alongside iconic artists PJ Powers, Monique Hellenberg and Tim Moloi.

A quarter of the blankets are to be specially distributed across the Eastern Cape, including to Bethsaida Ministry in Nieu-Bethesda, Paterson High School (which received 100 blankets in honour of its centenary), Missionvale Care Centre, Umphanda Foundation for Autism and Ekuphumleni Elderly Home.

Ms Anthea Hurling, the United Nations Multi-Country coordinator said, "It is a testament to the spirit of Ubuntu and the collective effort to build a happier, more inclusive world for all."

After the success of this event, we are looking forward to see what people produce for Mandela Day 2025!

STUDENT VICTIMS HONoured AT CAMPUS VIGIL

By Vincent Meya

The Democratic Alliance Student Organization at Nelson Mandela University recently held a candlelight vigil in honour of the three students who passed away under different circumstances on the weekend of 14th to the 16th of March 2025.

Students and staff came together at The Kraal on South Campus to reflect, mourn and show solidarity with the families and friends of the young lives lost.

The deceased includes Vulelani Senosha, who resided at Premium Student Accommodation and was stabbed on March 13th, Prince Gana who resided as Eleandor House and succumbed to an illness on March 15th, and Olwam Tima, who resided at Metro Rez, and passed away due to a minibus taxi accident that occurred at the University's South Campus on March 16th, a very tragic weekend for the university as a whole.

The candlelight vigil took place on 19 March 2025. Amongst the students and staff, was the Student Representative Council, representatives from The Metro Rez, other student-led political parties, and the loved ones of the deceased. SRC President, Lathitha Mbuzawana, expressed his sadness and conveyed condolences to the family and friends of the fallen students "It saddens me that we have found ourselves [students] in this situation." he said.

The air was heartbreaking when students sang their emotions out as they remembered and honoured the deceased, sharing photographs of their fellow late students, and lighting candles in their memory to pay their respects. The vigil was followed by a memorial service on North Campus the following day.

The SRC continues to offer assistance and work closely with the families of the honoured students to ensure that their loved ones receive the dignified farewell and justice they deserve.



NELSON MANDELA BAY HOSTS THE G20

By Sikelela Rollom

The G20 Digital Economy and AI meetings, held from April 7-11 2025 at the Boardwalk Hotel & Convention Centre in Gqeberha, brought together international experts, policymakers and digital leaders to discuss the future of the digital economy and AI governance.

Hosted by South Africa's Department of Communications and Digital Technologies under the country's G20 Presidency, this event was a significant step toward fostering global collaboration on digital transformation.

In his welcoming address on Day of the Meetings, Eastern Cape Premier, Lubabalo Oscar Mabuyane emphasized the importance of making the digital economy accessible to all. He urged that the discussions should translate into practical, inclusive solutions that benefit both developed and developing nations. "The digital economy should benefit all in the world, not a select few,". He further highlighted the need for strong partnerships across sectors to ensure the benefits of technology are shared equitably.

Minister of Communications and Digital

Technologies, Solly Malatsi, delivered the keynote address, stressing that the digital revolution must be inclusive. He called for the Global South to take a central role in shaping a fair digital future.

Speaking to MadibazNews, Minister Malatsi also took the opportunity to advocate for TikTok to extend its Creator Fund to South Africa, to support the country's rapidly growing digital content creator community and empower local talent in the digital space.

Nelson Mandela Bay Mayor, Babalwa Lobishe, also expressed excitement about hosting the G20 Meeting, noting its potential to impact the province positively. She pointed out that many developing countries have yet to fully grasp the transformative potential of the digital economy, and that this event presents a crucial opportunity to collaborate on shaping a more inclusive future.

These meetings were part of South Africa's ongoing efforts to navigate its leadership role in the G20, and contribute to global discussions on digital economy and AI governance, and hopefully contribute to our financial status and expose us to many new things.



AI IN EDUCATION: A HELP OR A HINDRANCE?

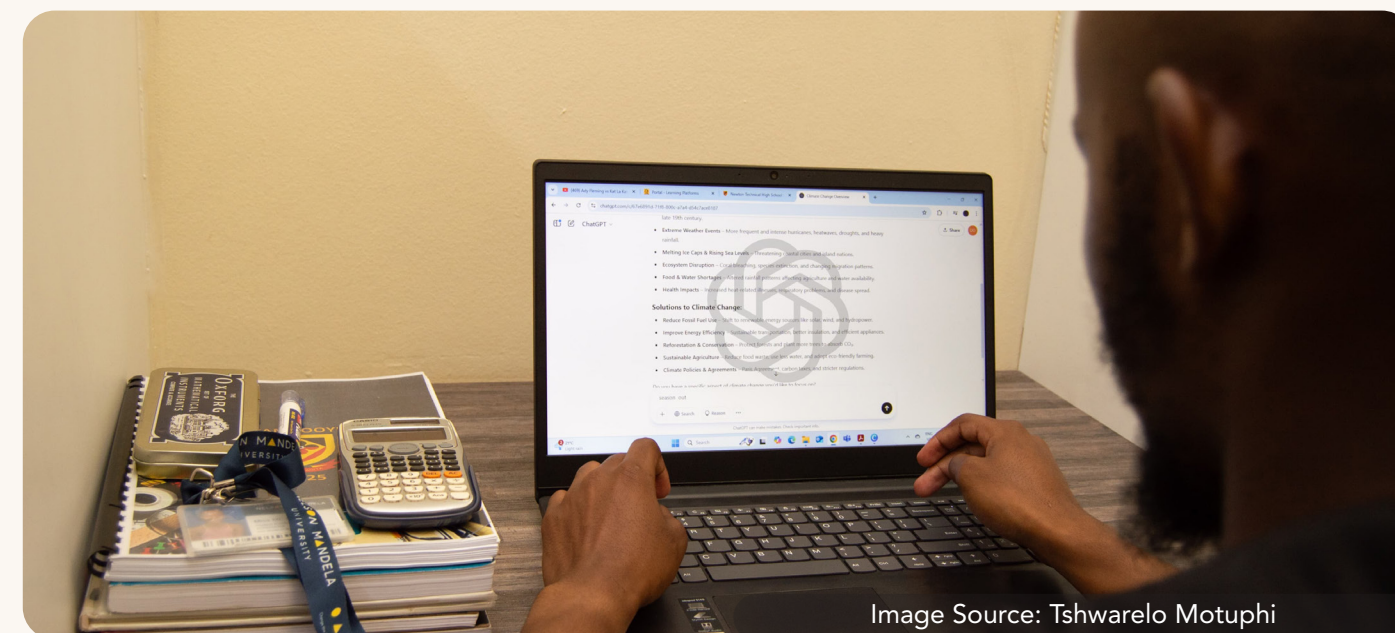


Image Source: Tshwarelo Motuphi

By Asisipho Mpahleni

At Nelson Mandela University, AI is shaking up academia. With no clear policy, students and lecturers grapple with its impact, some embracing it as a tool while others fear its threat to critical thinking.

AI has become that friend who's always there to help, either by simplifying complex topics or brainstorming ideas. A recent study found that only 10% of students have resisted AI's pull, while 83.3% believe whether AI use is cheating depends on how it's applied. Tshwarelo Mothupi, a fourth-year Bachelor of Education student, describes AI as "a study buddy you can consult whenever your human abilities fall short." Yet, 46% of students admit to feeling guilty, on becoming too dependent.

Lecturers, however, are less enthused. Many fear that AI weakens students' ability to think for themselves. While useful for research, they worry that students may over-rely on the tool, skipping engagement with the course material. This heavy dependence, they argue, erodes the very foundation of university education, which is to foster independent and critical thinkers.

The South African National AI Policy Framework, released last year, is the first step toward developing and implementing AI regulations, leaving institutions at a crossroads in the AI revolution. "There is currently no policy developed yet at NMU that governs and carefully manages the use of AI in academic writing," confirmed senior librarian Mzoxolo Tame.

In the absence of an AI policy, the burden of oversight now falls on individual lecturers, who rely on detection tools like Turnitin and Justdone to monitor AI-generated work and plagiarism. Lecturers enforcing their standards creates inconsistencies in how AI is accepted or rejected across faculties. The question then arises: Will universities regulate, collaborate, or resist?

The question isn't whether AI is a help or a hindrance but instead how its power can be harnessed to develop critical thinkers and innovators, not copy-and-pasters. The challenge lies in ensuring that students use AI as a tool, not a crutch, as there's no denying the benefits when used responsibly. In the end, the goal isn't to ban AI but to ensure that students remain the brains behind the work.

SHUTTLES CAUSE FOR SAFETY CONCERN?

By Kulungile Kanise

A few weeks into the academic year, shuttles are still a major issue at Nelson Mandela University.

Shuttles are a mode of transportation provided by the university for students to get to school, paid for by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme [NSFAS]. This year, getting to campus has proven to be quite challenging for Nelson Mandela University students due to there being a shortage of shuttle availability.

This is an issue that has been recurring, that the SRC has not addressed. Not only has the SRC not yet come up with a solution regarding this issue, but it does also seem as though they are not interested in finding a solution to this problem.

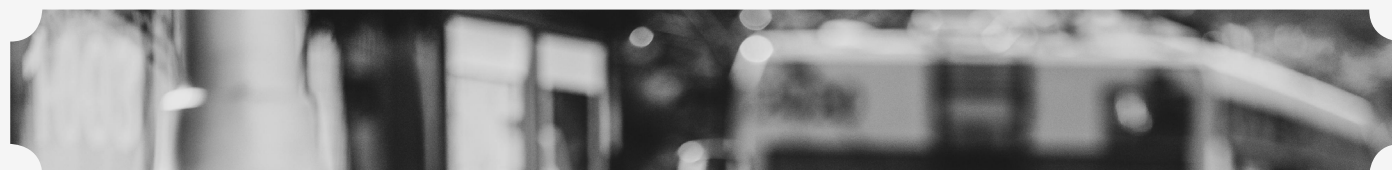
An example of a problem that the shuttle shortage has caused, is when an anonymous student said that this issue has put a strain on her financially, as she has had to use her living allowance to cover transportation from town to campus. She additionally mentioned that her safety has been compromised.

The student mentioned that she did not feel safe taking an Uber at night, but felt that she had no choice, for if she waited for a shuttle, it was likely that she would wait for a long time, which would result in her arriving late at her residence, making her vulnerable to robbery.

Offering a minimum number of shuttles is not acceptable, especially if it results in students being put in jeopardy. The question now is, how

does the SRC respond going forward? What steps can they take in presenting this problem to school management?

An increase in shuttle services is not only a time convenience but a safety convenience for students as well. Student well-being is a must, therefore we need to spread awareness so that our message can reach the correct and willing ears!



BE MINDFUL OF WHAT YOU POST!

By Ziggy Unam Motman

As students, we have fallen into a social society where receiving clout is vital, even if it means doing something negative. But what if I told you that the controversial opinion that was posted on TikTok was a deciding factor of whether or not you will be hired for the job you have always dreamed of?

Social media has created a platform to exercise our right to freedom of speech, however, it is important that we are aware of the very real consequences that go hand in hand with the content that we post.

Jessica Bryant recently hosted a workshop promoting the thought of changing our viewpoint on the trends and behaviours that we develop through our social media accounts. She emphasizes being sensible when it comes to our social media posts, contemplating language and our opinions.

It creates a sense of nobility, which in hindsight, reflects positively to potential employers.

Jessica remarks that employers use social media to post job positions, lure top talent, and structure their brand.

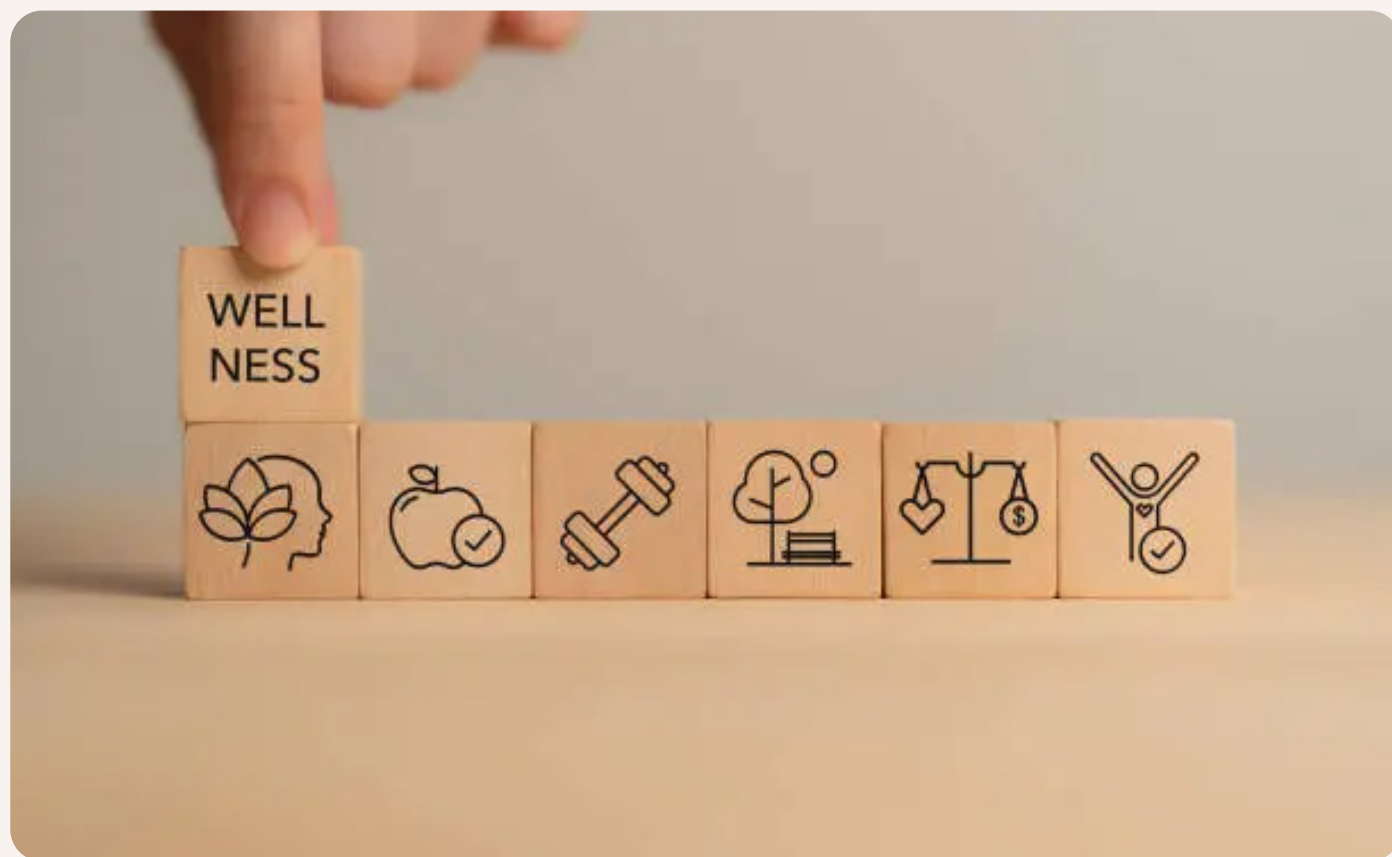
When looking for talent, recruiters tend to look at our accounts, and if we are using unsavoury language or having verbal altercations with other users, it may affect our chances of securing a good career.

A good example of mindful social media usage produced a favourable outcome. An inspiring woman named Jane Egerton-Idehen, who wrote an article about how she secured her position through social media, posted on LinkedIn "I recognise the power of these platforms as a means of bringing visibility impactful work and position oneself intentionally"

Social media has brought an endless surplus of entertainment, however, it should not hinder your job search. Therefore, make that TikTok video, participate in that challenge and you may receive a DM from a recruiter seeking some talent.



PAUSE, RECHARGE, REPEAT



By **Katleho Mokone**

Self-care is more than just a trendy buzzword – it is essential for maintaining mental, emotional and physical well-being. While indulging in face masks, bubble baths and aesthetically pleasing outings can be wonderful, self-care encompasses much more. It is the essence of realigning with yourself when everything becomes overwhelming.

As students navigate the demands of back-to-back classes, assignments, and social commitments, self-care days offer a vital chance to breathe, recharge and rebalance. By prioritizing self-care, you can step back, take a deep breath, and break free from the cycle of stress and cultivate a stronger relationship with yourself.

Consistency is key. Rather than treating self-care as a luxury, schedule it as a regular part of your life. A relationship with yourself is the most

important relationship. You can't pour from an empty cup, after all.

Self-care doesn't have to be extravagant. Simple actions like journaling, curating playlists, reading or taking a walk in nature can be powerful ways to recharge. Combine this with meaningful connections, such as catching up with friends or participating in group activities, to foster both personal well-being and a sense of community. Even small moments like enjoying your favourite ice cream on a solo date, or Netflix and chill, can help reduce stress and increase joy.

More ways to practice self-care, is by eating right, spending some time in nature, cooking a new recipe, and even just going for a walk.

By committing to self-care, students can navigate their academic journey with greater ease, resilience and happiness. So, pause, recharge and repeat – your well-being is worth it.

IS UNIVERSITY LIFE A SCAM OR NOT?

By **Ayanda Nkosi**

Many high school pupils are enticed with the dreamlike life that awaits them as students once they enter higher education institutions.

When matriculants receive their acceptance letter from a university, they become certain that they have finally unlocked a life of independence, social exposure and academic excellence. However, this expectation is harshly proven otherwise by the reality of being a student facing financial constraints, overwhelming academics and other distractions.

The current cost of living has most people in a chokehold, and even more so with students who depend on limited allowances to get by. Most students are on bursaries, and the majority form part of the 68% of tertiary students who are funded by NSFAS nationally.

Many often find that their stipends are insufficient for the demanding life of a student with needs like food, clothes and other learning materials. Additionally, the life of independence is unveiled under a different light of one

being solely responsible for their laundry and preparing their own meals, while attending to their academic obligations.

As challenging and dissatisfying as the new reality may be, it would be beneficial for students to be mindful and prioritize the following habits:

- Planning ahead is advice easily brushed off due to how cliché it sounds. However, planning a schedule may assist in keeping oneself accountable and motivated to achieve the goal of completing tasks daily.
- Drawing up budgets may serve students better as they can ensure that they adopt sustainable spending habits while prioritizing grocery shopping in contrast to impulsively spending on unhealthy fast foods for example.

University should be a phase that embraces the growth and responsibility that students can cultivate before reaching the workplace. With the necessary diligence, hard work, and responsibility, one can ensure that they can make the most of this enriching experience.



A MINDFUL SPACE; A PEACEFUL YOU



By Katleho Mokone

As a university student, your room is more than just a place to sleep, it's a sanctuary, a comfort zone, and a reflection of your personality. With 9 hours spent sleeping each day, according to the American Time Use Survey, our rooms play a significant role in our daily lives. Creating a mindful space can promote positivity, reduce stress and enhance productivity.

A room is a mirror of the state of your mind. A cluttered space lead to the feelings of overwhelm and mental disorganization. On the other hand, a tidy room promotes order and control, making that assignment more manageable. Studies show that a well organized space can instill a sense of accomplishment and pride, fostering higher self-esteem. It becomes a space where you feel safe, secure, and at peace.

So, what does a mindful space look like? It doesn't have to be perfect or Pinterest-worthy; it just has to feel like a place that works for you. Here are some key things to consider:

- **Keep It Tidy:** No one's asking for spotlessness, but a little organization can go a long way. A clutter-free desk or bed makes life feel less chaotic. Plus, you'll find stuff faster!
- **Make It Yours:** Add your vibe—whether its posters of your favorite band, photos of your friends, or cozy blankets. The more it reflects you, the more at home you'll feel.
- **Light It Up:** Use a desk lamp or fairy lights to make your space warm and inviting. Nature's light also works

Start small, and make your space good for you.

BEYOND SCREENTIME: THE RISE OF DIGITAL DETOX CULTURE



By Lusanele Damoyi

In a world where notifications never stop and screen time is at an all-time peak, many individuals are choosing to unplug.

The digital detox movement is gaining momentum as people realize the mental and emotional toll of being constantly online. From weekend retreats with no Wi-Fi, to strict no-phone policies before bed, digital detoxing is fast becoming a necessity rather than a trend.

Studies show that excessive screen time can lead to anxiety, sleep disruptions, and reduced concentration span. According to the Digital Wellness Institute, the average person spends more than seven hours a day looking at screens. This dependency affects not only mental health, but also productivity and personal relationships. Some individuals have even taken drastic steps, such as switching to 'dummy phones' with no internet access, deleting social media apps or setting daily screen time limits.

The benefits of digital detoxing are endless, Dr. Taylor, a psychiatrist speaks on a research study that was once conducted in the United States. This study focused on two families who were studied to see the impact of screen time on their mental health over a span of two weeks.

In her analysis, Dr. Taylor said, "the family that engaged in the detox reported much greater improvements in their kids' behavioural problems and hyperactivity, their emotional problems like mood or anxiety, and they found an improvement in pro-social behaviours. That is why they were more likely to be compassionate, to be thoughtful, and to have positive relations with other people."

While technology is an essential part of modern life, balancing online and offline time is crucial for mental health. Whether it's a short social media break or a full detox weekend, stepping away from screens can lead to a healthier, more mindful and fulfilling lifestyle.

TRADITIONAL VS. SERVANT LEADERSHIP: A NEW PERSPECTIVE

By Nathan John Ferndale

Effective leadership is so crucial in today's fast paced, technology-driven business world.

Two leadership styles have dominated the conversation: traditional and servant leadership. However, one might question what sets these two types of leadership styles apart, and which approach is more effective in the modern-day world.

Traditional leadership often emphasizes and supports notions of power, authority and control. Leaders who adopt this style, typically prioritize their personal goals over those of their team members. In contrast, servant leadership is mainly focused on serving others, empowering team members, and prioritizing their growth and well-being.

According to Udy Obi, a former student of Nelson Mandela University, personally, servant leadership has proven to be the best leadership style.

"My short journey has taught me that leadership is not about standing above others – it's about standing with them. It's not about power, but about service.", Obi said. This perspective highlights the importance of humility and collaboration in effective leadership.

Industry leaders and experts agree that servant leadership is better suited for modern business. By prioritizing their team's needs and empowering them to take ownership and make

presiding decisions, servant leaders foster a positive working culture, increase in productivity and driving success.

In conclusion, traditional and servant leadership styles differ significantly. Whilst traditional leadership emphasizes power and control, servant leadership prioritizes service, empowerment and collaboration. As a leader, it is your personal discretion to use whichever leadership style suits you best, just bear in mind that business, technology and even people are constantly evolving, choose well!



Leading with Ambition

THE IRON PRIDE OF THE BAY

IRONMAN South Africa returned to our shores (literally) on 27 March 2025, bringing another thrilling athletic event to the city!

By Ncobile Mahlangu

The Ironman Championship, created by John and Judy Collins in 1978, has become a global phenomenon, attracting athletes and spectators from around the world. Nelson Mandela Bay has been hosting this prestigious event for years, showcasing the beauty of South Africa to a global audience. ISUZU has been the proud sponsor of the Ironman Championship for an impressive 20 years.

The event is known for its electric atmosphere, with participants and spectators alike, eager to be a part of the action. The Ironman event consists of three challenging activities, being 1.9km swim, 90km road cycle, and 21.1km road run.

This iconic event not only attracts athletes, but also benefits the local community economically. Ironman South Africa draws tourists from around the world, boosting revenue for local businesses, hotels and restaurants. The event also creates temporary job opportunities, stimulating local economic growth.

Ironman South Africa also contributes to infrastructure development, driving investment in local infrastructure like roads, accommodation, and amenities. These improvements benefit the community beyond the event itself. Participants often express gratitude for the experience, citing the opportunity to compete alongside legends as a major highlight.

This year's championship took place on 30 March 2025, in Nelson Mandela Bay, and it was an exciting event that left an incredible mark in the friendly city. The Danish Magnus Ditlev snagged first place and holds the Ironman distance world record, with Belgian athlete Marten van Riel following in second, and the German Jonas Schomburg coming in third.

The Ironman event is a marathon, literally, but hopefully the next leaderboard will be dominated with South African flags, so with that being said, next year, the event will be returning – same time, same place, so mark your calendars and start training!



MAINTAINING THE PRESSURE OF UNIVERSITY LIFE



By Nura Du Plessis

University life is a transformative period that shapes young adults into capable individuals.

However, it is no secret that university life can be overwhelming, with academic stress, financial challenges, personal issues, and life's hardships taking a toll on mental health. So, how can you maintain the pressure of university life and actually enjoy the experience? Here are some tips:

- **Time Management** – Effective time management is crucial for balancing academics, sports, social life and personal responsibilities. To improve your time management skills, you should create schedules to prioritize tasks, avoid procrastination and use a calendar or daily planner to stay on top of your due dates/deadlines.
- **Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle** – Taking care of your mental health is vital amongst academic and social stress. It is important to get enough sleep and overall rest, to

regulate your mood and daily functioning and exercising regularly, reduces anxiety and depression. This also improves your mood.

- **Seeking support when needed** – Nelson Mandela University offers a range of support systems that include academic assistance, financial aid, career guidance, resources for students with disabilities, university clinics and student counselling like Emthonjeni Student Wellness.
- **Practicing self-care:** Romanticizing life is not something solely intended for social media, but also for your mind, body and soul. Looking good, feeling good and smelling good work in tandem and operate together to create an all-powerful weapon – you!

Pressure from university life is difficult, but it can be maintained by adopting these strategies and leveraging the support systems available. You will be better equipped to manage the pressure of university life and create a safe, enjoyable experience.

UNIVERSITY INFLUENCERS: SHAPING CAMPUS CULTURE THROUGH CONTENT



By Siphesihle Manyuka

In today's digital age, social media is no longer just a tool for connection – it is a platform for influence.

The emergence of university influencers has led to students transforming campuses into content creation. By balancing academics and digital content creation, these influencers are earning significant followings and brand deals. As their influence grows, they are not only reshaping campus culture, but also how brands connect with the younger, tech-savvy generation. This new wave of influencers is blurring the lines between education, entertainment and commerce.

The rise of university influencers is a phenomenon that has taken off in recent years, particularly on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube. These students create content around fashion, lifestyle, academic advice and even activism. What sets them apart from the traditional influencer, is their relatability. They are ordinary students, juggling coursework with content creation, making them highly accessible to their peers.

University influencers create content that resonates with a diverse range of audiences. They range from offering study hacks, to raising mental health awareness, giving career advice and even addressing social issues.

This diverse content allows them to engage with a broader audience, establishing themselves as trusted sources of inspiration. As a result, brands are increasingly eager to partner with these influencers, recognizing the authentic connections that they have with their audience. Through these collaborations, university influencers are shaping consumer behaviour and setting trends, proving their impact in the digital marketing space.

University influencers are not just content creators, they are redefining what it means to be a student in the digital era. By sharing their academic experiences, personal journeys and unique perspectives, they are shaping campus culture, and influencing the strategies of brands that want to reach the current student demographic. As social media continues to be a source of inspiration for millions of students, it's clear that this new generation of influencers are here to stay, and their impact will only grow stronger.

THE SCIENCE OF ZONING OUT



Image Source: istockphoto.com

By Ayabonga Malima

Many people commonly use the term 'zoning out' to describe the state in which someone may be disengaged from their surroundings or distracted at a given moment.

The definition of 'zoning out' is used to describe the mental state that occurs when a person momentarily disconnects from their thoughts and environments.

The state of 'zoning out' is considered a common form of disassociation, described as a pause in the mind's normal functions, which leads to disconnection from one's immediate thoughts or surroundings. From a neurological perspective 'zoning out' may be associated with miscommunication within the posteromedial cortex, the area of the brain responsible for alertness.

This miscommunication is often caused by disturbances in neurotransmitters. This state is particularly common in young people, and can be caused by a multitude of factors like boredom, anxiety and even academic fatigue.

For example, a university student watching a two-hour-long recording of a lecture they are

not interested in, will most likely enter into a dissociative state for the brain to handle the boredom it is experiencing. Similarly, mental fatigue and overwhelming anxiety can lead to brain fog, a symptom associated with lack of mental clarity, inability to concentrate, recollection, processing of new information and the forming thoughts, which in turn can lead to a zoned-out state.

The negative impacts of 'zoning out' vary. They can range from minor issues, like not hearing your name called by a friend in a group setting, to more serious impacts, like damaging professional and personal relationships, or even being involved in a car accident due to lack of concentration.

Many strategies exist to prevent excessive states of 'zoning out', like stress management, getting enough rest and finding things to keep your mind active. Mental exercises like puzzle solving, reading or strategic games may help train the brain to stay present in the moment.

Maintaining a balanced diet and engaging in regular physical activity and mindfulness practices like meditation or yoga, has also been shown to improve cognitive function and mental clarity.

WHY IS THE SKY BLUE

By Ayabonga Malima

The question, "Why is the sky blue?" is one that intrigues kids, teenagers and even adults. However, the answer to this question is not as simple as many people think. The most popular nonfactual explanation from opinion leaders for the sky being blue, is that it acts as a 'reflector' of the ocean.

These individuals claim the sky reflects the colour of the ocean, which, surprisingly, is not true at all. It was only through the diligent work of the scientist Lord Rayleigh, that a factual answer to this question emerged.

Lord Rayleigh, born in England on November 12 1842, made various scientific discoveries and contributions during his lifetime, most notable being his 1904 Nobel Prize in Physics, for the discovery of the noble gas Argon, which led to great advancements in the study of atmospheric

gasses.

Around 1870, he developed a theory to understand why the sky possesses a blue colour, known as Rayleigh scattering. According to his theory, the blue colour of the sky is caused by the scattering of light by gas molecules in the atmosphere.

To understand light scattering in the atmosphere, using the rainbow analogy can be helpful since light is involved. When sunlight travels through the atmosphere, which consists mainly of nitrogen, oxygen and argon, the colours of the rainbow are scattered to varying degrees, with the blue portion of the spectrum being scattered to a higher degree. This scattering occurs as the shorter wavelengths of blue light are more easily dispersed by the smaller molecules of the abovementioned atmospheric gasses. As a result, our eyes view the sky as blue.



Image Source: www.pexels.com

10 CONFIRMED CASES OF HFMD IN EASTERN CAPE



Image Source: www.istockphoto.com

By Mthetho Njube

At least ten cases of 'Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease' (HFMD) have been reported in East London, Eastern Cape, according to the Eastern Cape Department of Health on 23 February 2025. The department confirmed that most of these cases have been detected in primary schools and daycare centres, with the majority of the affected being children between the ages of three and seven.

According to Siyanda Manana, the Director of the Eastern Cape Department of Health, HFMD is caused by a group of viruses, known as enteroviruses, which infect millions of people globally annually. He urged the public to remain calm and take all necessary precautions while the Department of Health continues to closely monitor the situation and contain the outbreak.

The department highlighted the importance of preventative measures, including good hand hygiene and avoiding close contact with infected individuals. The department also advised parents to stay alert for symptoms like high fever, sore throat, fatigue, loss of appetite, and small blisters on the inside of the mouth, sides of tongue, palms of the hands, soles of the feet. Additionally, parents should be on the lookout for signs of dehydration and prolonged high fever in their children, as symptoms may appear less severe in some.

Manana reaffirmed the department's dedication and commitment to safeguarding the health of the entire community, and assures that they will respond swiftly to the outbreaks. He urges everyone to take necessary precautions to prevent the further spread of HFMD, as public cooperation is one of the most essential steps in managing a situation like this, effectively.

SA COMPETITION COMMISSION SEEKS GOOGLE COMPENSATION



Image Source: <https://pixabay.com>

By Mthetho Njube

Google is one of the leading tech giants in the world, dominating multiple sectors, like digital advertising and online searching. As concerns over competition and advertising revenue distribution rises, the South African Competition Commission has proposed that Google compensate the South African local news media with R300-R500 million annually for a period of three to five years.

This initiative claims that it will address the imbalance in competition and ensure a fair sharing of revenue between South African news publishers, and Google. This recommendation follows after the commission released the Media and Digital Platforms Market Inquiry (MDPMI) provisional report, which examines the impact of digital platforms on traditional media.

According to SABC News, the Commission found that Google enjoys a monopolistic position in South Africa's digital media landscape, which places local publishers in an unequal and

disadvantaged position.

The report states that the advertising revenues have been undeniably and significantly affected due to the fact that there has not been an equitable share of values between Google and news publishers in the country, both historically and presently.

The chairperson of the inquiry, James Hodge, stated that consumers increasingly access the news through Google search engines or social media intermediaries, powered by AI chatbots, rather than watching traditional broadcasts on television or visiting news websites directly.

This results in the digital advertising revenue to flow towards tech platforms rather than traditional media platforms, making it difficult for news outlets to remain financially sustainable. Hodge believes that this unfair trend has major consequences for democracy, as a struggling press would limit consumer access to credible journalism.

NEGATIVE SOCIAL MEDIA ALGORITHMS

By Okuhle Njengele

Social media platforms are integral to daily life, connecting people with friends, news, and entertainment. Behind the scenes, algorithms personalize content based on user's interests.

However, these algorithms create echo chambers by continuously recommending similar content. We are repeatedly exposed to the same viewpoints because the algorithm provides content that corresponds with our previous interactions. Algorithms that continuously display identical content, produce digital bubbles that strengthen our pre-existing opinions, while preventing us from seeing opposing viewpoints, which may worsen prejudices and confuse society.

These algorithms sustain a circle of comparable material delivery, forming digital bubbles that limit our understanding of the outside world, and reinforce our preexisting opinions.

By selecting posts that are emotionally charged or dramatic, the algorithms favour content that elicits strong reactions. The system's predilection for such content tends to attract more user involvement, which increases the propagation of fake news and misinformation.

False information travels swiftly on social media networks, leaving users confused, and prone to making poor decisions. In crisis situations, false information spreads quickly, escalating public anxiety hindering response activities.

Traditionally, people have learned things by closely observing people in their community and their social interactions. Algorithms on social media produce distortions that change the normal course of organic social learning. The algorithm-driven content curation system presents consumers with the most engaging information, leading to a distorted perception of social standards.

The misrepresentation of facts causes people to embrace attitudes or behaviours less common or less socially acceptable offline. Users are influenced to adopt to adopt similar opinions when extremist viewpoints are presented on social media sites, because it gives the impression that these viewpoints are more common than they are.

The content personalization aspects of social media algorithms not only boost user engagement, but can skew social learning processes, produce echo chambers, and spread false information.

Recognizing these problems is the first step to lessening their negative effects. Users must select a range of information sources, evaluate content critically, and understand how algorithms affect their social media interactions in order to actively manage their online experience.



Image Source: www.pexels.com

THE RISE OF DIGITAL NOTETAKING



Image Source: www.pexels.com

By Okuhle Njengele

For years, taking notes meant flipping open a notebook and putting pen to paper.

There is something undeniably natural about handwriting – it slows down our thoughts, helps with memory, and offers a deeper connection to what we are writing. However, in today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, digital notetaking is quickly becoming the go-to method for many. Tablets, laptops and smart styluses have changed the game, offering convenience, organization and accessibility like never before.

One of the main reasons people are ditching

traditional notebooks, is the unmatched convenience of digital notetaking with a tablet or laptop, users can store thousands of notes in one place, search for information effortlessly and sync everything across devices. No more rummaging through stacks of paper to find one note. Digital tools like OneNote, Evernote, and Notion allow for easy editing, voice-to-text features and even AI powered summaries.

Another important factor driving the rise of digital notetaking, is the environmental impact it could have, by lessening paper consumption, which could aid in the deforestation crisis. While manufacturing electronic devices does create an ecological footprint, the land and water usage for paper production remains a major concern. Therefore, cutting down on notebooks, sticky notes, and endless stacks of paper may contribute to long-term sustainability.

The rise of digital notetaking has not led to the disappearance of traditional methods. Handwriting remains the preferred method by many, as they believe it enhances their ability to focus and retain information. Hybrid solutions have gained popularity due to the fact that tablets basically mimic the handwriting experience. The remarkable two device functions as a bridge between paper-based and digital systems to provide users with the advantages of both platforms.

Looking ahead, notetaking will only become more advanced. AI is already being integrated into applications, making it easier to organize and summarize information instantly.

But whether you prefer a classic notebook or sleek tablet, the key is finding what works for you. After all the goal is the same – capturing and keeping track of important information in the most effective way possible.

CAMPUS LIFE FESTIVAL DELIVERS YET AGAIN

By Zukukhanye Maseti

What could be more delightful than witnessing not only residential athletes competing in sports, but also non-athletes getting their chance on the big stage? The Campus Life Festival was aimed at bringing both groups together.

Unfortunately, Metro residence was unable to attend the event due to the passing of one of their students, as noted by Makhitha Mokodi, the campus sports coordinator.

Among the residences that emerged victorious, Affinity triumphed in women's football, and Suburban Digs took home the men's football title. Phase 3 secured the women's rugby final, and Oceanview won the men's rugby.

"Last year we were too soft, but now we are more arrogant. We know what we want this year," said Yongama, the coach of Suburban Digs, after their narrow 1-0 victory over Oceanview FC in the finals.

Despite the Oceanview Underdogz winning the rugby league last year, their residence manager has not shown any interest in providing them with funding.

"Our residence manager does not provide any training equipment for us, not even a ball or refreshments," said Oceanview coach, Chad. He added that they might consider competing as an independent team in the upcoming Campus league tournaments.

Two residences received awards: PSA received the Formation Award, while Phase 3 took home three awards, including the Spirit Life Award and the overall sports award for both males and females.

Mtunzi Hewu, who oversees everything Campus Life related, shared plans for next year, mostly emphasizing the goal of creating a vibrant campus experience for all students staying on campus, especially non-athletes, to also enjoy the sporting activities.



Image Source: Wandile

MADIBAZ EYEING LONG-AWAITED RETURN TO VARSITY CUP

By Oyama Kema

The Madibaz Rugby team opened their Varsity Shield campaign with a defeat against the high-flying Varsity College in Durban, but that would be the last time David Manuel's side would taste defeat in the round stages of the competition.

They have since claimed consecutive victories against every other side in the competition – including an inspirational underdog victory against the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in front of a packed Madibaz Stadium. A game ending in a thrilling 27-24 victory – decided by a last-minute try.

Just a fortnight later, on March 21, Madibaz took on Sol Plaatje University, continuing their red-hot form in the Varsity Shield with a 38-28 home victory. That was after overcoming Walter Sisulu University (WSU) at the Sisa Dukashe Stadium in Mdantsane the week prior.

Madibaz remain undefeated at home, with five consecutive wins. Their relentlessness has earned them 2nd place on the Varsity Shield table – their dreams of promotion alive and well.

It has been three long years since the side last competed in the prestigious Varsity Cup. With their 2022 Varsity Cup campaign an underwhelming one, ending with eight losses out of nine games, forcing relegation to the Shield. Their recent performances have, however, sparked new hope amongst the Madibaz faithful.

After overcoming Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) by a 45-27 scoreline at home on March 28, Madibaz booked their spot into the Varsity Cup promotion playoffs yet again, where they faced familiar foe in the form of UWC. This stage of the competition has proved tricky for Madibaz over the years – having failed to get past the semi-final on all previous occasions since dropping off to the Shield in 2022.

However, Manuel's side was finally able to get that monkey off their back after defeating the Capetonians by a comprehensive margin of victory on April 4. The hard-fought 41-24 win secured Madibaz a spot in the playoff finals where they will take on the final boss, Varsity College, on April 11. A win here will see Nelson Mandela University climb back to the peak of varsity rugby.



MADIBAZ SWIMMER SHINES AT PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL COMPETITION



Image Source: Thandeka Moni

By Thandeka Moni

Abigail Swanepoel is making waves as a standout swimmer for the Madibaz Swimming team. The BCom Accounting student has excelled both in the pool and as a mentor to younger swimmers.

The 21-year old started swimming at an early age, thanks to strong encouragement from her parents. She took up lessons, and quickly developed a passion for the sport which she has maintained to this day.

Her competitive journey began in 2023, when she first joined the Madibaz Swimming Team. Now training at Infinity Club [where] she balances intense workouts with coaching young swimmers who share her enthusiasm for the water.

Her competitive debut came at the 2023 USSA Championships, where she made an immediate impact alongside her new teammates. In 2024, she had a breakthrough season, earning multiple medals at the USSA Championships in September. She continued her success at the National Short Course Championships in Pretoria, where she claimed three bronze medals, sharing the victory with her teammate and captain, Dylan Botha.

Swanepoel's momentum carried into 2025 at the SSA National Open Water Championships, held from March 7-9 at Marina Martinique, Jeffrey's Bay. Facing top-tier competition from other countries, she secured 7th place in the 19&O 1.5 km race, advancing to the knockout challenge and reaching the second round. She capped off her campaign with a strong 9th-place finish in the demanding 5km race.

Looking ahead to her next competition in June 2025, Swanepoel remains focused on her growth.

She offers an inspiring message to aspiring swimmers: *"Being in the water means facing your fears and doing what you love. You'll always have people who look up to you and support you on your journey."* With her dedication and determination, Swanepoel continues to rise, proving herself as a key figure in Madibaz Swimming.

Stay tuned for Madibaz Swimmers in June 2025 Competitions.

MADIBAZ FOOTBALL FINDING THEIR FEET AGAIN



By Thandolukayise Shangase

The Madibaz Football Team kicked off their season with a 1-1 draw away from home in their opening match, followed by a heavy 3-0 defeat against Major Chiefs. Struggling against the log leaders, Madibaz failed to secure any points, suffering a 2-1 home defeat.

So far, Madibaz has endured five losses, secured four draws, and claimed four victories in their 13 league games. They have scored 19 goals while conceding 17 and have managed to keep only two clean sheets. However, the team showed resilience by bouncing back with a 2-1 win against Stinging Bees on March 1, 2025. Their impressive form continued as they secured three consecutive wins, netting nine goals and conceding just two. This remarkable turnaround has brought them within 13 points of the log leaders.

A standout performance came on March 15, 2025, when the Madibaz dominated Dynamos with a commanding 5-1 home victory. This crucial win propelled them to 5th place on the log with 16 points, solidifying their presence as a team to watch in the competition. The Madibaz now aim to maintain consistency and focus as they strive for a strong finish in the league.

Under the leadership of Coach Elrio van Heerden, the Madibaz were seeking to extend their winning streak to four consecutive matches when they came up against Young Aces at Veeplaas Turf on March 22. The match ended in a 2-2 draw, leaving the four-point gap between the teams intact, as Aces hold onto 4th place with 21 points.

With only two matches remaining in the men's Regional League in Stream B, Van Heerden's side is determined to make a strong statement as they push for a higher position in the standings.