

WHAT'S UP WITH NORRACO AND NSFAS

By Sikhulule Moyeni

Nelson Mandela University students funded by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) expressed desperate pleas on social media platforms like Facebook, as they anxiously await the arrival of their July allowances. The University recently addressed the concerns through a communication sent via the university MEMO email.



On 26 June 2023, the University management and the Student Representative Council met with NSFAS and Norraco representatives to discuss the disbursement process of allowances. Last year, NSFAS introduced the concept of an NSFAS bank account for students, aiming to simplify the distribution of student allowances and help students learn financial management.

As part of this initiative, all tertiary and TVET college students are introduced to direct allowance payments. NSFAS partnered with distributing partners like Coinvest, eZaga, Norraco and TeneTech Technology. Each distributing partner is responsible for a specific group of institutions, Norraco handling the allowances for Nelson Mandela University students.

Norraco is a South African FinTech company specializing in payment and banking solutions. It enables students to receive their allowances through a Mastercard, replacing the previous third-party IntelliCard system. They notify students via SMS about

the onboarding process, and then receive a physical card that can be used at ATMs nationwide, as well as point-of-sale systems like Zapper, SnapScan and Uber Eats.

This will also include Merchant CNP cash-outs at retail outlets and can be used at ATMs nationwide. Virtual cards will also be provided for Card-Not-Present ATM withdrawals, Merchant CNP cash-outs at retail outlets, and third-party applications. According to the University, NSFAS will now directly pay students their book, living, meal, and transport allowances, while tuition and accommodation allowances will still be paid to the university.

The University requested that NSFAS release the July allowances to the university to disburse to students, as they are currently on recess and in need of their allowances. While NSFAS representatives agreed to discuss this matter with senior members and communicate the outcome to the university, no further communication has been received since the meeting.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings from your Guest Editor! It's an honor to be back here, even if only for a letter.

As I dive into the Fifth Edition of our beloved student newspaper, I can't help but feel a mix of nostalgia and excitement. The MadibazNews has come a long way since its inception, and it continues to be a vibrant reflection of the incredible work done by our dedicated team.

Delve into the thought-provoking realms of groundbreaking opinions, perceptive life concerns, and imaginative sci-tech topics. With each page, you'll discover the beating heart of our student newspaper, pulsating with news, insights, and inspiration.

We start off by shedding light on the concerns faced by NSFAS students awaiting their July allowances. We understand the importance of addressing these anxieties and stand in solidarity with Nelson Mandela University students.

On a brighter note, we celebrate the Madibaz Women's Volleyball team's recent victory at the Youth Day tournament. Let's rally behind them as they compete in the University Sports South Africa Competition, hosted by the University of Limpopo.

As I bid you adieu, my fellow MadibazNews enthusiasts, I want to express my gratitude for allowing me this moment to reconnect with you. Together, we are the heartbeat of Madibaz!

Ashley Malepe

STOP GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE!

By Somila Tiwani

The scourge of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) continues to plague our society. It has been a long-standing issue on university campuses country wide, with Nelson Mandela University baring no exception.

The recent tragic death of Zimkhitha Nthisela, a second year Tourism Management student from George Campus, bore witness to this. The university condemns such acts, and remains committed to working with staff and students to offer safe spaces. The Transformation Office has a duty to deal with such issues.

Ulleta Marais, a GBV counsellor at their office, states their purpose is to promote institutional transformation, and affirming transformative institutional culture that promotes diversity and social inclusion through programmatic interventions focusing on the constitutional principles of human dignity, equality, fairness, non-racism, non-sexism and redress.

A thorough report from the office consists of these outcomes: by 31 May 2023, 44 complaints of varying natures had been lodged online. Gender-based violence, which includes various categories, accounted for 52.5% of the offences. Many of the complainants were first-year students, with respondents being seniors. To date this year, Nelson Mandela University has expelled two students, suspended two others, and issued a written warning to three students.

The university is committed to embedding an ethos of accountability in its quest to build an inclusive, affirming institutional cultures. Policies have been updated, improved reporting systems have been implemented, and complainants now



Image Source: pexels.com

have additional support alternatives.

The effects of GBV are far-reaching, and extend beyond the individual survivor, family and society as a whole.

For female support, and to join the female support group, contact Marais at 072 710 9965. Support is also provided for male and queer victims as well. students are urged to follow the university's Transformation Office social media pages and visit their website, transformationoffice.mandela.ac.za, for more information.

WE ARE PAYING TENANTS



Image Source: Pexels.com

By Naledi Masilela

The situation is described as being stuck on a sinking ship with no lifeboat, that sinks deeper as each year passes. A group of Nelson Mandela University students living in off-campus residences, have called on the university and the National Students Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) to take urgent steps to improve the quality of their accommodations.

The students, who all receive financial aid through NSFAS, said that they were under siege – mentally, physically and emotionally due to their poor living quarters. In a memorandum of grievances sent from 2021, till date, by said students through emails and other means, the students stated that they are not being treated as paying tenants. This matter has been reported countless times to the university by many different residents, who feel as though their complaints are not being heard.

Amongst the residences that have been extensively mentioned, are Laboria in Central/Town, and Ocean View in North End. Students in these accommodations endure various hardships like inconsistent cold showers, unsanitary kitchens and bathrooms that are not disinfected, leaky roofs, and persistent Wi-Fi issues, just to name a few.

An anonymous source disclosed that these grievances were reported to the university over two years ago, but since, no improvements have been made. The students argue that these residences are in clear violation of their contractual agreements, and demand that only accredited accommodations that meet certain standards, should be allowed. They also insist on regular evaluations to ensure compliance, and if this demand cannot be met, they ask that the allowance cover private accommodations to open the market for more competition. Ultimately, all the students ask for, is to be treated and provided services on par with paying tenants.

CREATING A SAFE VENTING SPACE

By Lonecia Mbuyane

To 'vent' means to allow air/liquid to pass into an exclusive space – the perfect analogy for opening-up and expressing different emotions to someone you trust or feel comfortable with. People do this in different ways, for various reasons. However, venting at the wrong time or manner may make you feel ignored or worse – the person you are venting to, may respond with a terrible remark, and you might regret ever saying anything.

Taking the suitable space and time into consideration, could avoid bad venting outcomes. Avoid venting when the next person is having a bad day. The worst thing you can do is vent to someone who just vented to you, or received bad news. Give them the space and time to be there for themselves, before taking on your troubles too. Before saying anything to the person you want to vent to, ask them if they are in a good space to listen or offer you advice. By doing so, you can avoid unconsciously burdening the next person, or being ignored.

Being on the receiving end comes with responsibility too. When someone comes to you to open up, they need your physical and emotional presence. Your posture plays a vital role. Avoid using your phone, and offer them your undivided attention. Remember to show that you understand what they are saying, by nodding your head. When they are done, ask if it is okay for you to offer advice because sometimes some people just need you to listen. Also, avoid statements like "it's not that deep", if they think it is, it is your responsibility to acknowledge that. The cost of therapy is even more reason for us to be there for each other like never before.



Image Source: Victoria Hlongwane

WHEN SELF-AWARENESS MEETS EGO



Primadonna
MARINA

I know I've got a big ego
I really don't know why it's
such a big deal, though



Image Source: Spotify

By Loncia Mbuyane

We are a generation that is aware of mental health. We have taken control of how we feel, think, act and how others perceive us. Being able to identify your feelings and emotions along with the reason behind them encourages you to create boundaries, and to find your identity and better yourself.

Things take an unhealthy turn when one misinterprets self-awareness for who they are, and refuses to make changes. Instead of identifying the reason behind bad behaviour, we justify it and it becomes us over others. Most of us have heard, or even said, a statement along the lines of "Unfortunately this is who I am, and if you can't deal with that, maybe you shouldn't be in my life."

This statement has a clear admission of inconvenient behaviour. Sometimes people know that their behaviour is unacceptable, but the idea of changing to make others feel better, becomes the hardest part. They would rather stay that way and dwell on the delusion that the real ones will stay in their lives regardless. Self-awareness turns to self-centredness. The presence of a big ego and allowing that to take over or control us, costs us a lot more than our ego allows us to imagine.

Self-awareness comes with responsibilities. Be open to guidance. The people who call you out are those who genuinely care, and if they cannot accept you, chances are no-one will. If your self-awareness is helping you, but harming others, perhaps it is time to dial it down.

THE YOUNG AND UNREALISTIC

By Sikhulule Moyeni

'Bare' series, award-winning author, Jackie Phamotse, recently published and released the final instalment of the series 'Curtain Call'.

Phamotse, a local author, dedicated her writing to addressing social ills affecting the youth and impressionable individuals. Her work serves as an eye-opener, shedding light on the social issues prevalent today. It began with 'Bare: The Blessers Game' an intense and informative narrative.

In her interview with the Hustler Corner SA, she revealed that the book draws inspiration from her personal life experience, but is also well-researched, and thought-provoking. This strong intelligent woman has had a profound impact on many young people, urging them to be aware of social issues and society at large, primarily by encouraging them to read.

Reflecting on Phamotse's work urged me to ponder the challenges faced by youth in navigating a life filled with various pressures like poverty, education, mental health and the relentless pursuit of success – all which often lead us into treacherous territories.

We live in a world where everything is exposed and easily accessible, covered with the constant consumption of wealth showcased on smartphone screens through social media and advertisements. We are bombarded with status symbols of affluence, along with get-rich quick schemes, luring us into the allure of luxury and the glamorous lives of celebrities, politicians and influencers.

Everyone is fed that immense wealth can be gained early with minimal work and effort.



Image Source: Pexels.com

This fosters unrealistic expectations that result in disappointment and leads to involvement in harmful, criminal activities.

As a generation raised in a fast-paced world, where multimedia and globalization offers content that sells us dreams, we find ourselves longing to acquire such wealth. It is marketed and advertised effectively with influential figures endorsing these ideas.

But, we cannot solely blame capitalism, social media, media or celebrity boasting. We need to be honest and consider the possibility of our sense of entitlement, and impatience. Living in a world of instant gratification has conditioned us to desire immediate results with minimal effort. It is crucial for us, as youth, to reflect on what truly matters, and acknowledge that nothing worthwhile, comes easy.

IMPORTANCE OF FOOD SAFETY PRACTICES



By Mhlahli Ntozonke

“Let your food be your medicine, and your medicine be your food” (Hippocrates). On June 7 2023, the world celebrated the fifth annual ‘World Food Safety Day’ to raise awareness, prevent, and identify foodborne risks that affect human health and food security. Proper food handling can help reduce the risks of foodborne bacteria like E. coli, Listeria, Norovirus etc.

The World Health Organization has reported that one in ten people worldwide are affected by foodborne diseases every year, with 16 000 000 people falling sick daily due to the consumption of unsafe food, resulting in an estimated 420 000 deaths annually. Common symptoms of foodborne illnesses include diarrhea, vomiting lasting between 1 and 7 days, abdominal cramps, fever, and fatigue. Poor personal hygiene, food from unreliable sources, cold holding temperatures and the use of contaminated equipment, have been associated with the high-risk causes of foodborne diseases. Taking the following significant measures can help reduce risks:

- Wash your hands, food, cooking materials and counters.
- Keep raw food separate – like raw meat from vegetables, fruit and other foods as bacteria can easily spread.
- Wash your dishcloths
- Use separate chopping boards.

The SIA Insurance blog suggests ensuring the food you receive from your supplier, is free from bacteria, and your responsibility. Keeping track of expiry dates on your food, and avoiding consuming food that has passed its expiry date is very important, as it is considered unsafe to eat. Sick workers should be kept away from food, especially if they work in the kitchen and handle food, as they can easily contaminate an entire facility.

Stay in touch with the local public health department and the Centers for Disease Control to stay informed about the latest research/news on food safety to help prevent lawsuits and save lives. The government enforces safety requirements in food businesses, including food handling practices, licensing, managing applications and the suspension and cancellation of food business licenses. Foodborne diseases should be taken seriously, as they not only make us sick, but can be deadly. It is important to adhere to safety practices to stay on the safe side.

THE DANGERS OF THE RED TIDE

By Sonia Van Der Linde

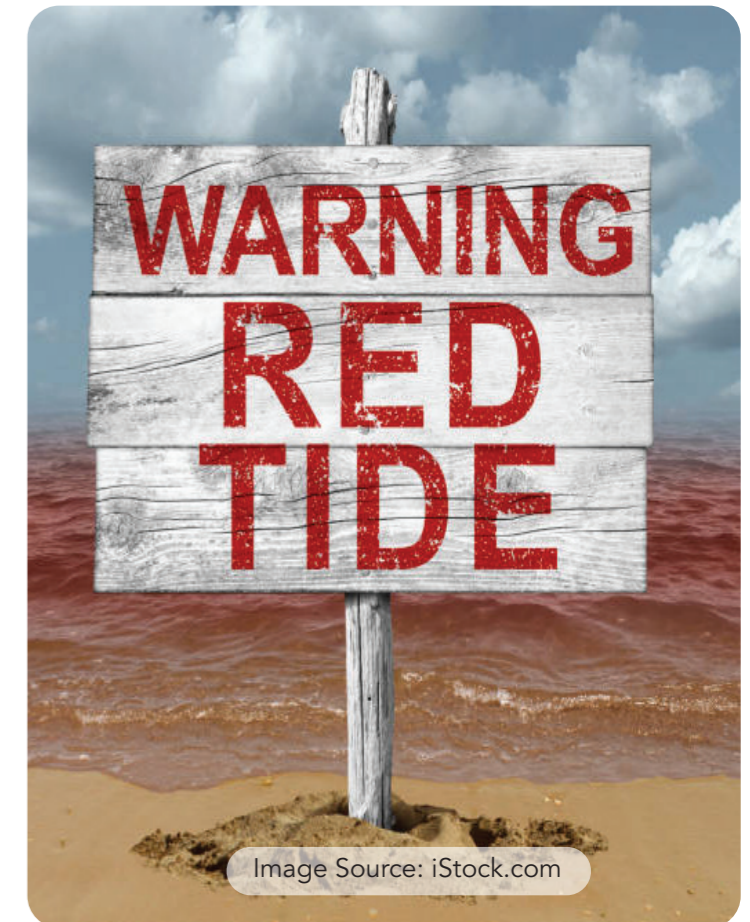
Algal blooms are a worldwide occurrence, where colonies of algae spread uncontrolled and, in many cases, produce harmful toxins, known as harmful algal blooms (HABs).

Red tide is a common example of one of these HABs and, as there are over 300 species of Micoralgae that can produce a red tide, it is one of the most studied algal blooms. This phenomenon is highly exacerbated by anthropogenic carelessness, such as farming, sewage run-off and pollution.

Red tide is caused by light dependent phytoplankton that overgrow to a point that their density causes colour changes in the water, such as like red, green or brown, depending on the species of phytoplankton. This occurrence can be extremely harmful to animal life, as the toxins produced often leads to sickness and even death.

During these blooms, the algae also takes up the majority of the oxygen, leading fish to die and wash out to shore, or drift to the surface, where they are ingested by birds and mammals, spreading the toxins. When ingested by humans – which rarely occurs as several restrictions are placed on beaches and the fishing industry during a red tide, mild to severe illnesses occur, like skin rashes, respiratory problems, organ failures and even death.

As of February, an approximate 5 tons of rock lobster has washed out onto the Western Cape shores due to a severe increase in HABs, lowering the oxygen supply within the water. This caused the Department of Forestry,



Fisheries and Environment (DFFE) to issue a Situation Red Alert, as they attempt a large scale rescue operation and rehabilitation in order to save as many of the rock lobsters as possible.

According to research, these events are predicted to only get worse, as destruction of the natural ecosystem by human operations, are unlikely to cease and will only grow. The actions of industrial and irresponsible farming and sewage processes have, and will continue to cause irreversible damage within every ecosystem, especially the ocean, unless a serious conservation effort is put into place.

IMPACT OF NANOTECHNOLOGY ON HEALTHCARE

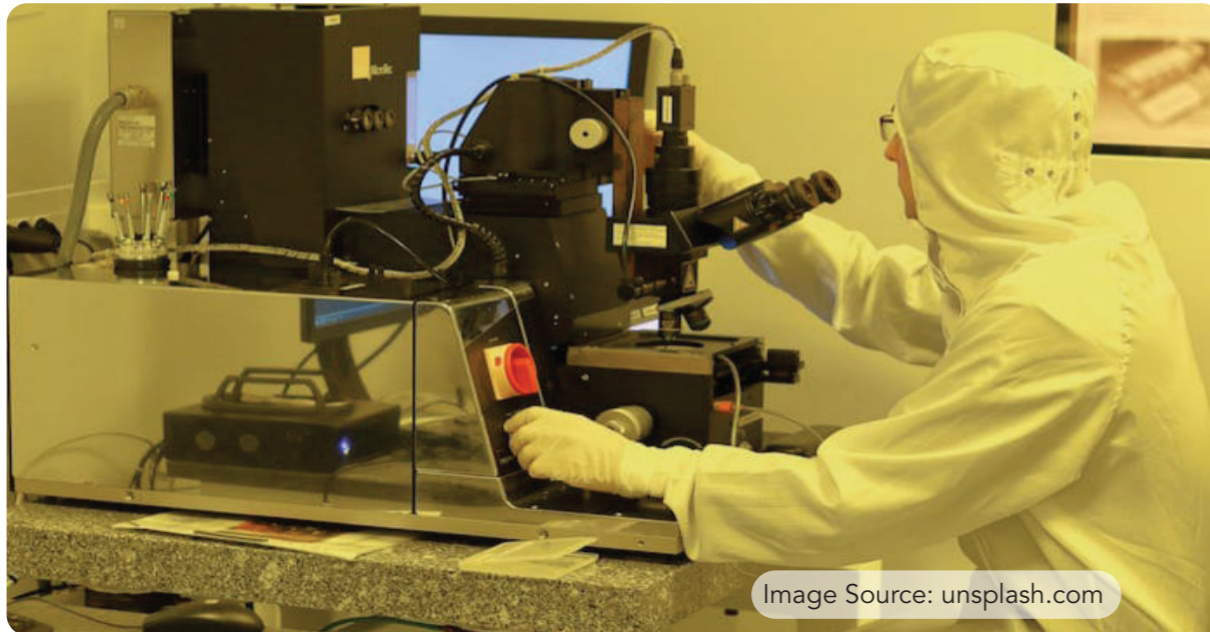


Image Source: unsplash.com

By Akahlulwa Radana

Nanotechnology is a type of science and engineering focused on the design, production and utilization of systems, structures and devices through the manipulation of molecules, along with atoms at a nanoscale.

Now, consider the possible impact nanotechnology has on the field of healthcare. Nanoparticles possess a great number of special health benefits – in fact, nanoparticles are employed in molecular imaging, and they aid in the identification, measuring and visualization of cellular and molecular changes that occur in both vitro and in vivo. Nanoparticles can be used as probes in vivo by affixing them to proteins, antibodies and nucleic acids molecules. Thereafter, these nanoparticles can be used to visualize and quantify chemical processes within the body.

They exhibit good photostability, brightness and absorption coefficients over a wide range of spectrum. In addition the mentioned health benefits, nanoparticles can be used to administer site-specific targeted medication, and in doing so, they increase bioavailability, produce fewer adverse effects, and decrease toxicity to other organs. However, we have only discussed the positive impacts of nanotechnology. It is important that we analyse the negative impact too.

Nanoparticles can become toxic depending on characteristics like size, structure and their ability to aggregate. They could cause cancer because of insolubility. This occurs when nanoparticles have a surface area to volume ratio that is larger, causing the chemical and biological reactivity to increase. Nanoparticles enter the body through ingestion, inhalation or through the dermis via cosmetic products like sunscreen. Nanoparticles present in cosmetic products have been linked to ailments like erythema. At present, nanotech is at the forefront of healthcare product development because of the numerous advantages it offers. But it is not without its flaws, therefore it must be viewed with caution.

THE SCIENCE OF NIGHTMARES

By Sonia Van Der Linde

Have you ever woken up in a sweat-driven, heart-thumping haze, with an intense sense of dread? Chances are, you have experienced an extremely common and terrifying phenomenon – a nightmare.

To explain what nightmares are and why they occur, one has to first understand what a dream is. Dreams are commonly defined as a series of images drawn from new and old memories that involuntarily run through our minds as we sleep. Many theorize that it is our subconscious attempting to process new information, and older repressed memories which our minds may find traumatic or insignificant.

Dreams occur during the deepest phase in our sleep, known as Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep. During this phase, brain activity is at its highest and we start to dream – a process that consists of 25% of our total sleep, and occur in intervals, each one longer than the previous. It is one of the most important stages of sleep, as it can affect your mood, concentration and memories.

Naturally, REM is the phase where nightmares also take place, commonly in the longer intervals, which is why they affect us more compared to the other dreams we have in shorter intervals. There are a number of explanations for nightmares – anxiety, medications like beta-blockers and anti-depressants, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

In the event nightmares are caused by PTSD, it is usually your brain attempting to process trauma without overwhelming the waking mind, and it is commonly experienced by around 60% of war veterans, and 25% of people who suffered abuse. Less intense and infrequent nightmares usually stem from daytime anxiety and scary visuals we have witnessed, like horror movies and disturbing imagery and stories.

Nightmares may sound terrifying, and you may wish to never experience one again, however, it is simply our brain's attempt to heal itself and subconsciously deal with subjects our waking selves are too scared to even touch. Nightmares are not malevolent, it is just our past. So, the next time you experience one, face it head on.

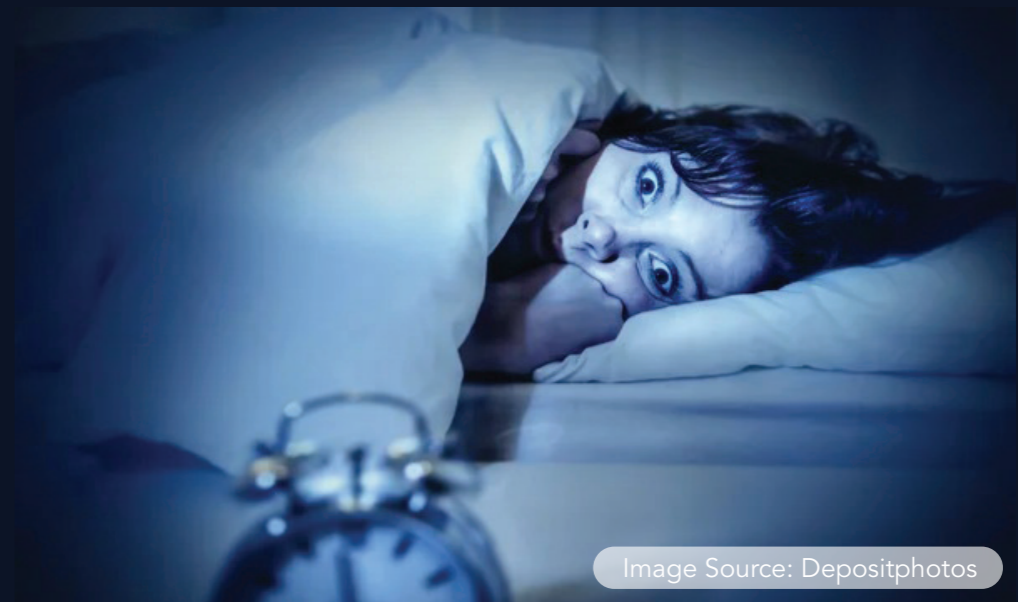


Image Source: Depositphotos

PERRY THE PLATYPUS!

By Phuthego Precious Nthoke

We all remember the iconic line from Phinease and Ferb by Dr Doofenshmirtz "Perry? Perry the Platypus!"

Ever wondered just how much we know about the platypus? Do they really lead double lives? The beloved show portrays Perry the Platypus as a boring house pet that disappears from time to time to lead a double life as this secret agent, James Bond-like character. What we do know is that platypuses do not in fact, lead double lives, and they are also far from dull and boring.

They may not be teal in colour, but they do possess waterproof and insulating fur with two layers, as the platypus happens to spend over 12 hours underwater, and not trying to foil Dr Doofenshmirtz shenanigans. We may not know much about the platypus, but we do know that when placed under a UV light, they have a greenish-blue glow. It seems like the more we know, the more confusing they become. Not only are they venomous, but they are also one of the few mammals that lay eggs.

Given their odd shape that looks like a primary school arts and crafts project, it should not be surprising that they evolved from the same group as marsupials and placental mammals over a hundred and sixty-six million years ago. Marsupials include koalas, wombats and kangaroos, where placental mammals include whales, squirrels and humans.



Image Source: Karen Laark Boshoff

Another interesting fact about platypuses, is that they do not have nipples – evolution swapped out that feature for mammary glands, specialized to secrete milk. We can safely assume that although they are not secret agents, they are mysteriously interesting and there is so much more to learn.

MADIBAZ BANK ON MOMENTUM

By Fullstop Communications

The Madibaz Women's Volleyball team will want to carry the momentum of winning the Youth Day tournament into the University Sports South Africa Competition, that started 2 July, running through to July 7, hosted by the University of Limpopo in Mankweng.

Under the guidance of coach Nolan Bentley, the Madibaz recorded an exciting win over a strong Volkswagen outfit in the final of the Youth Day event, which was held in Kariega under the auspices of the Nelson Mandela Bay Volleyball Association. It was significant triumph for Gqeberha girls, after having lost to the same opponents in the round-robin stages of the competition, when matches were contested over just one set. The final was decided over the best of three, and Madibaz won 2-1.

With their confidence high, the Madibaz will aim to hit the ground running. Bentley explained that the university had been consistent performers at the USSAs, regularly finishing in the top 10. The plan is now to move further up, and only a place in the top 8 will do. As is often the case with tertiary institutions, where there are a constant changing of the guard, the team are relatively inexperienced, but passionate and ready to produce their A-game, always. "One of our strengths is our spirit," Bentley said. "They enjoy playing together and that is the secret of a good team."

Bentley believes these are exciting times as he is happy with the progress of the team going into the USSAs. They have put in the hard yards ahead of the national event and supplemented their usual training with a custom gym programme to complement match play. They are currently fourth in the USSA Easter Cape League standings after three rounds, and despite the Youth Day triumph, placed third in a tournament hosted by Nelson Mandela University.

Bentley picked out perennial title contenders Vaal University of Technology, University of Western Cape and University of KwaZulu-Natal as the obstacles in their way. The team will have to be tenacious and show confidence throughout the week to match the top sides and achieve their goals, he said.



Image Source: Supplied

NETBALLERS MUST STEP UP TO THE PLATE

By Fullstop Communications

The annual varsity week is hosted by Stellenbosch University from 3 to 8 July 2023. Even without a number of key players from last year, Madibaz Netball Class of 2023 should have plenty to offer at the University Sports South Africa Tournament.

Last year, Nelson Mandela University excelled by finishing runners-up nationally. However, SPAR Madibaz Netball Coach Lana Krige, mentioned they lost several players from that squad. She is banking on return of Captain Mothira Mohammed and Kaylin Coetzer from injury, to provide some stability. Both went under the knife, with the USSAs being their first competitive matches after rehab, with the coach hoping to see both at full strength.

"We have several first years in our squad and the level at this week will provide them with the awareness of why they have had to work so hard," said Krige. "Also, we have some second-year players who need to live up to their potential." As for the seniors, she said they needed to soar "like the eagles they are".

The Madibaz have often gone into tournaments as like this as underdogs, returning giant slayers. Krige cannot wait to see every player stand up and be counted in Stellies. The team mentor said they put a lot of work in, following several defeats this season. They trained twice a day, five days a week with additional fitness sessions on Saturdays.



Image Source: Supplied

They will be one of six teams competing in the super league section of the tournament, played in round robin format. The top four advance to the semi-finals. A number of unknowns await them

MASANDAWANAS WIN THE DSTV PREMIERSHIP 6 TIMES IN A ROW



Image Source: www.psl.co.za

By Aphiwe Bonga

On the 16th of May 2023 Sundowns were crowned with the DSTV Premiership cup for the 13th time, 6 times in a row. They secured the title with a record of seven games remaining in the season, ending the league with 21 games won out of 30 games played and 16 points ahead of second placed Orlando Pirates.

Mamelodi Sundowns coach, Rhulani Mokwena says 'it's an extreme honour to be the head coach of this champion team. It has to sink in at some point because there is a lot of hard work and effort that goes into a team like this.' He further went on to mention that "we have improved the team and the individuals themselves as well as bringing many youngsters into the squad while still maintaining the high standards that we have."

Despite Sundowns winning the 6th league title in a row, they were disappointed when they drew against Wayde AC and were knocked out of the CAF Champions league semi-final. Cassius Mailula, a Sundowns right winger says he had a difficult time processing this loss. "I have learnt a lot in that competition, and it was just one of those things that happen in football, and it took me time to realise that we were out."

Mamelodi Sundowns has been dominating in the South African football for many years mostly because of quality players, the coaching staff and their financial superiority. Last season they tightened their supremacy by winning the domestic treble: MTN8, Nedbank cup and Dstv premiership. However other teams believe that the Sundowns success is because of their buying power. Brandon Truter, Sekhukhune united coach says, "there's no FIA (financial) fair play in the country and they can buy any quality they want."

Rhulani Mokwena looks up to Pep Guardiola, a Manchester City coach because he believes that he is a successful, and incredible football coach. Mokwena also spent time in England learning in person from the Premier League's best, this led him to apply new strategies in his team to match the Manchester City championship, now both teams have a record of winning their domestic leagues with remaining games still to play.

PRESSURE? APPLIED



Image Source: Supplied

By Fullstop Communications

Pressure is applied to the Madibaz men's team to fly the University flag high at the University Sport South Africa squash tournament, taking place 3 to 7 July in Randburg.

Following the departure of Ward, Keeley and Shone, the women are in a rebuilding phase, so all eyes will be on the well-established men's side to provide for the university. Coach Jason Le Roux, said there were different goals for each team in Johannesburg, the former to prove that they are among the top combinations countrywide, with the latter looking to learn and gain experience.

However, the overall positions are decided by a combined men's and women's group team, with Le Roux confident a podium was well within their grasp. Although the chips are stacked against them, the future seems promising for women, with rising stars Bianca Lansdown and Tanith Moreton in their midst. Both turned out for Eastern Province schools, but this is their first foray at varsity level, which they may find tough. They are also joined by Savannah Barron.

The men's team are likely to be in the same position next year, losing many key players. "But, at this stage, we have plenty of experience and will be fielding almost the same team as last year," Le Roux said, confirming first-year Michael Donaldson coming in for Gershwin Forbes as the only change. Le Roux did not expect easy times with North-West University boasting top player Tristen Worth, but "I believe that if the men can do well and the women can come to the party with some good results, we could get close to a podium.

"He said several other varsities also seemed to be struggling in the women's department and saw this as an opportunity. "We will continue to work hard in our preparations and see what unfolds during the week." The USSAs will be followed by the annual Growthpoint interprovincial in Pretoria, where Bower and Mpini will represent the Eastern Province A side and Donaldson will turn out for the B team.

DU PLESSIS PUTS SA MMA ON THE MAP

By Siyolise Gqongwana

In a surprising turn of events, South Africa's Dricus du Plessis shocked the world on the morning of July 9th when he defeated the number one ranked Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) Middleweight, Robert Whittaker. Many saw the 29-year-old as the overwhelming underdog in this matchup as the Australian has never been defeated in the Middleweight division by anyone either than the current champion, Israel Adesanya.

The second-round technical knockout (TKO) not only secured du Plessis' spot as the number one contender for the title, but also put South African mixed martial arts on the map – and the Pretorian has not been shy in expressing his patriotism. "Representing South Africa is something I take very seriously, it's something I wear on my shoulders," he said, to UFC Connected.

Despite his seemingly rapid ascension in the MMA world stage, du Plessis has been a professional fighter since 2013, right after he completed high school. He competed in the Africa-based promotion, the Extreme Fighting Championship, where he became a two-time middleweight champion and one-time welterweight champion. He eventually burst into the UFC scene in 2020, defeating Marko Perez on his promotional debut – following a short notice call up by UFC President, Dana White. Furthermore, du Plessis racked up a 6-fight undefeated streak which propelled him to championship contention. He will now challenge Israel Adesanya at UFC 293 for the Middleweight championship. "I want to be the first real African champion, born, trained, and bred in Africa," he said, controversially.

The Middleweight champion, Adesanya, did not take kindly to those comments as he was born in Nigeria and views himself as an African Champion – despite living in New Zealand for most of his life. He has since gone on a social media rampage where he talks about how he will show du Plessis who the real African is at UFC 293. Whether the racial undertones are part of his fight promotion strategy, or a reflection of his unappreciation for the South African's controversial statements, the fight at UFC 293 promises to be a blockbuster affair for all MMA fans.



Image Source: Oddschecker

MADIBAZ CLINCHES VICTORY AGAINST FORT HARE



Image Source: Clementine Nkuna

By Prudence Maluleke

On July 9th, the Howard College court witnessed a spectacular game of basketball between the Madibaz Women's Basketball Team, and the University of Fort Hare. The game ended in a scoreline of 35-28 in favour of Madibaz, which was testament to the team's resilience and hard work.

From the onset, the Madibaz team had the upper hand as they tactfully utilized the skills of key players like Sibulele Mandeka, Nobubele Phuza, Oneza Potelwa, Shadi Malope and Ncumisa Liwela, along with a defensive masterclass from Ziyathandwa and Siphokazi Simelane. However, the absence of key player, Clementine Nkuna, proved to be a disadvantage and the team had to make up for absence through exceptional teamwork and coordination.

According to the chairperson of the Madibaz basketball, Nobubele Phuza, the team was well prepared for the game, having been part of the University Sports South Africa (USSA) in December. This experience had given the team a chance to sharpen their strategies and hone their skills, making them an almost unbeatable force. The game was not without its challenges, but the team's knowledge of their opponents' weaknesses and strategies gave them an edge over the University of Fort Hare's team. Despite the missing influence of Nkuna, the Madibaz' players proved that they were more than capable of getting one over their Eastern Cape counterparts.

Phuza expressed delight at the team's performance, stating that they were working towards growing the brand of basketball at Nelson Mandela University. She added that the team was set to commence its campus league in the coming weeks, and the victory would help boost the team's morale and motivation. Clementine Nkuna added by saying, "The challenges we had faced in some of the USSA games, including this one, was practising patience, as the intensity arose, the frustrations increased, and this is where we had lost patience - not only with the game but also with each other"