



Juegos Mundiales para Transplantados
ARGENTINA
MAR DEL PLATA 2015



SA TRANSPLANT SPORTS ASSOCIATION

TEAM MANAGER'S REPORT

20TH WORLD TRANSPLANT
GAMES

MAR DEL PLATA, ARGENTINA

23RD AUGUST TO 30TH AUGUST 2015

HERMANN STEYN



INTRODUCTION

Being appointed as Manager of the South African Team for the first time was a great honour for me.

There have certainly been some delays in the planning. The management and control of the event has been changed from the local team in Mar del Plata to the National Ministry of Sport of the Argentine Government in Buenos Aires at a very late stage. From the start I realized that communication with the LOC was going to be quite a problem as we have experienced many delays in receiving replies to our messages.

There are a number of other reasons why I also felt very honoured to have been a part of the Team.

They are:

1. To be a part of a very special group of people who have been given a second chance in life due to a transplanted organ;
2. To be able to assist the various members with the day-to-day arrangements and to make their participation in the Games as easy as possible;
3. To be able to share with them the triumphs and heartbreaks of participation in a competition such as the WTG and also to share many highlights through the period of the Games;
4. To see our athletes compete with total commitment and to see them showing real humbleness in their success;
5. To experience the loving support and encouragement from the accompanying persons for the athletes and the Touring Committee;
6. To be part of a Touring Committee where every member gave their all to make our participation such a success.

I am sure that I have made a number of mistakes and that I may even have stepped on some toes or made people feel uncomfortable. It was however a testing time for me due to the difficulty in dealing with the LOC in Argentina and I wish to apologise for that.

A highlight for me was that the Team was officially recognized again by SASCOC and the Department of Sport and the first-time athletes received their National Protea Colours. Maybe an equal highlight was the 89 medals the team won (41 Gold, 24 Silver and 24 Bronze) and being third of 44 countries after Great Britain & Ireland and Argentina. Both these teams had well over a hundred athletes. Our 46 athletes won 41 Gold medals compared to the 42 Gold medals that the 81 athletes won in 2013.

It is my pleasure to present this Report to the Committee and members of SATSA with the wish that it also be shared with, in full or in part, the athletes so that they are able to comment as well.

Thank you again for the honour of being able to travel with the Team as their manager and to get to know a very special group of people even better.

Sincerely,



Hermann Steyn

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THE GAMES

1. REGISTRATION

The new on-line registration process introduced by the WTGF at the 2013 Games was not used and the LOC in Argentina developed their own registration system for use for these Games. The registration process did not go as smoothly as we would have liked it. We had to register electronically as well as e-mail all registration documents to the LOC. The entering of data such as the rooming list for accommodation and also the athlete entries in the various disciplines had to be done on Excel spreadsheet which is not desirable for a competition of this magnitude. I would like to thank all the participants for keeping to the registration deadlines and by doing that, making sure that the National Office kept to the WTGF deadlines.

The Registration process at the Games went reasonably smooth and everyone knew where to go and what could be expected during each day of the Games.

South Africa registered the following categories for the Games:

- Athletes National Team: 46
- Supporters: 16

2. FINANCES

SATSA applied to LOTTO for funding of 1.7million to enable the SA Team to participate in the Games but at the time of writing this report the application had not been approved yet by the Lotto Board. We were very fortunate to have received a very generous sponsorship by the Department of Sport. Our thanks go to various sponsors who supported athletes and the Western Cape region also received a generous grant from the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport for their athletes.

All the Regions also got involved in various fund raising projects like golf days and also by booking an entire theater for a musical show. These fundraising events ensured that we have been able to cover most of the costs but our athletes still had to contribute a minimal amount.

I wish to thank all athletes and supporters who kept to the payment deadlines to ensure that all expenses were paid before we left for Argentina.

3. TRAVEL AND VISAS

Travelling by air over long distances is at the best of times difficult but made even more so when the travelers are organ recipients. We were presented with a number of travelling options which differed substantially from R 25 000 to R 14 000 per person and in the end decided on Emirates Airlines, not only because of them being one of the best airlines in the world but also that we saved at least R 200 000.

When we started negotiations with travel agents we received excellent service from Champion Tours and we decided to use their services. In the end their service deteriorated and we battled to get our tickets issued and on the day we left we still had a lot of issues with the some athlete's return tickets. One mistake by the travel agent even cost them money as they had to upgrade one of our athlete's return ticket. Our experience was that they had over-promised and under-delivered, a fatal mistake in any industry. I would still like to thank Cecelia Amory for her assistance, she was always willing but could not deliver on her promises.

In May 2015 we were informed by the Argentinian Government that all sports organizations involved in the organization of sports events to be held in Argentina needed to apply for Sports Visas. The cost for these visas would have been R 69 000 for the 46 athletes.

After extensive research on the internet your Management Committee found reference to the fact that a Sport Visa is not required by **amateur** sports people and we highlighted that to the World Transplant

Games Federation. In the words of the South African Councilor on the WTGF, Willie Uys, “ that was the last straw that broke the camel’s back” in their negotiations with the Argentinians. They were very embarrassed and immediately contacted their Government Department dealing with Visas and requested that all our athletes be exempt. (a saving of R 69 000 to SATSA)

Travelling arrangements during the Games:

Airport Pickup. The organizers arranged bus coaches from Buenos Aires to take us to Mar del Plata. Our coaches were very comfortable and we all had a good 406 km, six hour trip to Mar del Plata.

Mar del Plata Transportation. Inter venue travel arrangements were excellent and double decker luxury busses ensured that people arrived at venues on time.

4. ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

The Team and supporters stayed in the excellent Grande Hotel Provincial. All were very satisfied with the service and the rooms.

Our team was well looked after and we were allocated two host/translators, Augusto and Erica I wish to thank them for their hospitality and in overcoming the language problems we regularly had.

Meals were of good quality although most athletes found the Argentinean breakfasts of fruit, kiddies cereals, bread and powder scrambled eggs not to their liking and would have preferred more food of substance like bacon, eggs and sausages.

Participants enjoyed their dinners at the Provincial hotel apart from the Gala Dinner. Quite a few of our athletes had supper at the many restaurants in the proximity of the hotel enjoying the excellent Argentinean steaks that they are well known for and our younger unmarried athletes enjoyed chatting to the locals, although they had to communicate by their cellphone translation programs. All participants were supplied with a “Boxed Lunch”, again we were not always impressed with the bread/cakes staple food. I would think that most of us lost a few kilo’s on this tour.

5. TOURING COMMITTEE

I would like to thank the following members of this committee for their hard work, commitment and compassion with which they approached their portfolio:

- Team Captain Stan Henkeman and his vice-captains Robyn Emslie and Constance Sithebe
- Media liaisons: Suretha Maartens
- Physiotherapist Andri Smit;
- The following senior athletes and mentors who made sure each athlete knew the where and when of their participation:
 - o Stephan van den Berg
 - o Daniel Matsoso
 - o Johan Kleingeld
 - o Harold Moore
 - o Ed Ormond
 - o Derrick Pillay & Dick Kruger
 - o Elsa Siedle

6. MARKETING

I thank each and everyone who contributed to the marketing campaign before, during and after the Games, namely:

- Athletes made sure that their stories appeared in local and national newspapers and magazines pre- and post the Games. As emphasised before, it is the responsibility of every member of SATSA to make sure the message of Transplant Sports & organ donation and transplantation reach every part of the country;

- Everyone who kept our social media up to date, special thanks to Suretha Maartens who facilitated the social media..
- The Western Cape athletes were featured on Espresso (SABC3) before we left for Argentina.
- A news team was at OR Tambo to interview the Gauteng athletes on their arrival from Argentina
- Die Burger newspaper interviewed members of the Western Cape on their return to Cape Town.
- News clips appeared In many local newspapers.
- The Team Manager and Team Captain was interviewed on RSG after the Games. A Western Cape athlete, Vivian de Klerk was also interviewed by RSG before the Games.
- The Team Captain was also interviewed by SAFM before and after the Games.

7. CLOTHING

I would like to thank XCo Sports for their commitment and friendly service. A special thanks to Anton and Biddy Roux and other members of the Gauteng Region who worked very hard to ensure that all ordered clothing reached the right persons in time.

It was decided that SATSA will stay with the same design in track suit for future Games and that athletes would not be allowed to swap track suits at Games. All athletes were informed and we thank them for their adherence to that decision.

The Team received many compliments with regard to our outfits. Being photographed in our National Team Colours for the Team photo made a great impression on all present. The only teams that had team blazers were South Africa and Australia and we stood out from all the other teams.

The Management Committee's decision to stay with the same team colours/track suits for every Games means that SATSA only need to issue clothing to new athletes coming onto the Team with every Games.

8. SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

Opening Ceremony: The Opening Ceremony lost some of the impact by not letting teams walk in as a cohesive group with their flags leading each group. Only five athletes of each country represented that country in the walk in. The rest of the athletes were seated in the stadium. The Opening Ceremony was conducted in Spanish and English and also very enjoyable with all the dances making for a really spectacular event.

Closing ceremony: The athletics programme ended in the usual way with athletes and supporters lining the tract and meeting in the middle of the field and it contributed to the feeling that we all belong to a big international family. It was a pity that a lot of athletes had left the stadium already to freshen up at the hotel before leaving for the Gala Dinner. In future we need to encourage ALL athletes to be present at the Closing Ceremony, as this was not the situation at these Games.

Cultural evening: This was also a special evening of cultural clothing and gave everyone a taste of the many different countries.

Gala dinner: This splendid evening was held at the same venue as the Opening Ceremony and the food was excellent. Our thanks to the Local Organising Committee who made all the arrangements, as well as the WTGF's Office for honouring the Team Managers with certificates for all participants.

9. MEDICAL

All supporters had to have yellow fever vaccinations and athletes had to get exemption certificates from travel clinics.

I thank every athlete who submitted their medical forms on time. A special thanks to Andri Smit, our physiotherapist. She was on board with enthusiasm and skill and if it wasn't for her continuous treatment and monitoring of athletes, we would have ended with fewer medals. She will definitely be approached to assist with the WTG 2017!

10. SPORTING EVENTS AND RESULTS

I would like to emphasise the following with regard to the sporting events:

- **Rules and Officials:** Most of the sporting events ran smoothly, in some there were problems with Officials not being up to date with the rules of the events. The timing of some of the events ran very late, resulting in long waiting periods for the athletes involved. The handing out of medals were also sometimes delayed for long periods which meant that athletes who had competed would have to wait for hours before they would be handed their medals. This made it very uncomfortable and difficult as some athletes had to participate in other items as well.
- **Team Managers Meetings:** These meetings ensured that most of the arrangements for every day's events were communicated to the Teams. I thank the Captain and Vice-Captains for their commitment in getting the information to members.
- **Medal ceremonies:** These events were presented in a smooth and efficient manner.

I would like to stress the following to ensure that we stay in line with SASCOC's requirements:

All athletes need to be a member of a club relating to their sports discipline. If we want to continue to have the respect and recognition of various sports federations, we need to ensure that we become part of the official sports fraternity.

In future the following criteria will apply for selection and it will be strictly enforced:

- Reaching the qualification standard
 - Past performances at WTG
 - Active participation in selected sporting events
- An athlete will have to provide the following to the Selection Committee:
- Proof of membership to a sports club or part of school sports **AND/OR**
 - Proof that he/she is actively participating in sports events

Results of Team South Africa:

It is with pride that I can announce that Team South Africa was placed 3rd overall by winning 89 medals in total:

- Gold: 41
- Silver: 24
- Bronze: 24
- Total: 89

12 SUMMARY

Finally, to each of the Team and the accompanying supporters, a **BIG** word of thanks for your support, and for making my job as your Team Manager a pleasant and uncomplicated one.

The support from the supporters was particularly heartening as they could easily have gone about doing their own thing.

The next WTG will be held DV in Malaga, Spain and we are sure that we can count on each and every member of SATSA and our supporters to again do SATSA and South Africa proud. I trust that DV, we will all be available and qualify for Malaga.



HERMANN STEYN
TEAM MANAGER

17 September 2015