

# SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSPLANT SPORTS ASSOCIATION



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## South Africa ends well on the medal table at World Transplant Games

South Africa once again shone at the World Transplant Games which took place in Newcastle, the United Kingdom from 17 August to 24 August 2019.

At 57 members, the team took on far bigger teams than themselves but still managed to finish fifth overall with 67 medals. Of those medals, 22 were Gold, 23 Silver and 22 Bronze medals.

The World Transplant Games are held every second year, and brings thousands of transplant recipients and also donor families together on the sporting field to celebrate the second chance they received after a life-saving solid organ transplant.

This year more than 2 000 athletes from 59 countries across the world competed in a variety of sporting codes that included athletics, road running, petanque, tennis, squash, swimming, cycling, golf, badminton and ten pin bowling.

The team went to Newcastle with a clear objective: Finish in the top 10 and ensure that the message of organ donation is spread far and wide. In order to secure a top 10 finish, all athletes had to qualify twice for the World Transplant Games. The first qualification opportunity was at the South African Transplant Games in 2018 that took place in Port Elizabeth. Athletes then had to qualify again before the start of the World Transplant Games. This qualification process and two training camps before the World Transplant Games ensured that South Africa sent the best possible team to Newcastle.

The Transplant Games are unique, in the sense that all athletes have received a life-saving organ transplant. Although most athletes are in top form and fit, there is always the possibility that a medical emergency can occur due to the nature of some athlete's conditions. Executive Secretary of the South African Transplant Sports Association (SATSA), Hermann Steyn said that this event was the perfect platform for athletes to compete at the highest possible level as well as celebrating a second chance at life with more than two thousand people from different nations experiencing the same feeling. At each event, he sees reconnecting and forging of friendships characterised by unconditional acceptance.

Hermann also added: "We intend to maintain the high quality of competitiveness and improving on our 5th position by continuing to maintain the high qualification standards and conducting two national training camps again after our National Games in 2020 in order to prepare for 2021 World Games in Houston, USA in May 2021."

For further information on other activities at SATSA, please go to [www.transplantsports.org.za](http://www.transplantsports.org.za).

To register on the Organ Donor Foundation, please go to [www.odf.org.za](http://www.odf.org.za) to register online. Most importantly, please discuss your wishes with your family and friends

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**Notes for editors**

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South Africa's 2019 World Transplant Games Team