



WESTERN CAPE
TRANSPLANT SPORTS
ASSOCIATION



Transplant Sports News

A word from the Chairperson



It is hard to believe that Christmas is almost here already – where did this year go!

Christmas is a time of reflection. Let us be mindful of the spirit of sharing, caring, love, joy, and generosity. Because it happens at the end of the year, it is also a time to reflect on what we have been up to in our lives all year long.

As I am writing here, reflecting on the year 2023, I am grateful that we at Western Cape Transplant Sports Association had a successful year. Our membership has grown by 11% as we were able to attend more Awareness Days to spread the message of Transplant Sport amongst the public.

We had 13 athletes that attended the World Transplant Games in Perth, Australia during April 2023 and they came back with a whopping 19 medals, but most of all these athletes came back with a heart filled with thankfulness. Thankful for the experience to participate at the World Games, for new friendships that were made, and memories created to last for a lifetime.

The next National Transplant Games will be hosted in Cape Town from 26 to 29 September 2024. We hope to have as many Western Cape athletes as possible to come join in the fun and be part of this amazing Transplant Community.

As you enjoy the Festive Season with friends & family, I wish you and your family love, peace, and happiness. Enjoy the holiday season and to everyone who will be traveling, please travel safe.

May we all come back well rested and ready for 2024.

EVERAUX

Rentia le Roux

Please contact chair@wctsa.org.za for any Transplant Sports related enquiries or visit our website www.transplantsports.org.za



Cape Town Sport Council Sport Awards

Cape Town - The Cape Town Sport Council Sport Awards took place on 30 August 2023 at the Lagoon Beach Hotel, Milnerton. The Western Cape Transplant Sports Association are tremendously proud of all three nominees that represented our Association at this event. We can report that Lloyd Perry walked away with Cape Town Sportsman of the Year award, Kyle Southworth won the School Sportsman of the Year award and Rentia le Roux was the runner-up in the Sportswoman of the Year category.

We would like to thank Western Cape Government Cultural Affairs and Sport and Cape Town Sport Council for hosting this prestigious event and acknowledging the hard work of our athletes and Federations.

Congratulations to our athletes on your stellar performances at these awards.



BETTER TOGETHER.

Jacques makes Transplant Sports proud on the Bowling Greens

Bowling - In October 2023, Jaques Carstens walked away with no less than five trophies at his local Bowls Clubs price giving.

Jacques is a member of Paarl Bowls Club and proved himself as one of the the best during the 2023 season. He was awarded best single male player and various other awards during their 2023 price giving awards.

Jacques received his lifesaving liver transplant in 2016, and only took up bowling in 2019. This makes his performance in the 2023 season and at the World Transplant Games, where he won Silver in the men's singles, outstanding. This was his first time participating in a World Games.

We wish Jaques all the best for his future in Transplant Sports and Bowls and thank him for the excellent example of sportsmanship his is showing.



Western Cape Provincial Sport Awards – Kyle wins Schools Sportman of the Year

On 21 October 2023, Kyle Southworth, Western Cape Transplant Sports Association athlete, walked away with the 2023 Western Cape Schools Sportman of the Year Award presented by Western Cape Government Cultural Affairs and Sport.

Minister Anroux Marais hosted this prestigious event at the Cape Sun hotel where athletes, federations, and administrators from all over the Western Cape were rewarded for their performances during the last year.

Kyle will now represent the Western Cape at the SA Sport Awards taking place in 2024.

Transplant Sports would like to congratulate Kyle on this achievement and wishes him all the best for his future. Thank you for being a true example to your fellow athletes.



Transplant Sports represented at Renal Care Society Fun Walk in Cape Town



Renal Care - Kidney Awareness Week was celebrated from 2 to 6 September 2023 in South Africa and The Renal Care Society of South Africa (RCSSA) organised a fun walk to raise much needed awareness around kidney health.

The Western Cape Transplant Sports Association joined Renal Care Society of South Africa at their Kidney Awareness Fun Run in Mouille Point on the 3rd of September 2023.

Rentia le Roux, Chairperson of the Western Cape, got the opportunity to spread the word of organ donation & transplantation at this event while Hennie le Roux, SATSA Treasurer, handed out pamphlets and Transplant Sports bracelets to the participant. This was a great opportunity to raise awareness around Transplant Sports in South Africa.

The RCSSA was established in 1975 and through various activities they make valuable contributions to renal health care in South Africa. Their members include registered nurses, health professionals and clinical technologists. The mission of RCSSA is to advance the professional development of members practicing in nephrology, transplantation and renal care. They promote the highest standards of patient care.

The Western Cape Transplant Sports Association would like to thank Jonathan Maree, President of RCSSA for giving us the opportunity to be part of this event and to promote Transplant Sports. We look forward on building on the longstanding relationship Transplant has with RCSSA and thank them for supporting our organisation and it's members.

Please visit their website at <https://renalcaresoc.org.za>



Meet our new member: Leendert Wijnja shares his transplant journey



I remember the day I was diagnosed with heart failure. I sat in the doctor's office expecting the news that I am in desperate

need for yet another valve transplant as I was told would happen at my previous heart operation. I had had heart problem since the day I was born. I was born with a congenital heart condition called tetralogy of Fallot which to put in layman's terms meant that I had 4 faults with my heart at birth. I received my first heart operation at 18 months where they repaired my damaged heart for the first time and for most of my childhood, I was mostly ok. When I was sixteen, I had to undergo another heart operation this time to replace a failing valve whereafter I was told this will happen again given 15-20 years. Little more than 15 years after that I was in such denial of my condition that I straight up told the doctor that he was wrong I only needed a valve replacement. It was a shock, and it took another two months before I was placed on the transplant list a week before my 31st early 2020.



Till today I wonder if this diagnosis wasn't a blessing in disguise because what followed about a month after my diagnosis was the start of the global pandemic Covid-19. I call this a blessing because shortly after my diagnosis I had to stop working as a minister in the Dutch-Reformed Church, I had to move back in with my mother, and I had to learn how to live with a heart that had only 11% function. If I had chosen to remain working, stay in my position and with Covid-19 making the round I am convinced I would have died. If not from heart failure surely from Covid-19.

I will admit that after my diagnosis I was mad at everything, God, the church, my own body, my inability to do basic chores, the fact that I was always thirsty and limited to 1.5 liter liquids per day; which angered me greatly; and to be honest I think I had a depressive spell in that time as well. But after three months one day I got up and just told myself that if I was going to die I might as well do it in style. So, I started giving myself a goal to achieve each day, something small, something I knew I would be able to do achieve. The idea was that once I had achieved my goal for the day that

day was counted as a good day, and I could then rest for the rest of the day. I started small with just a walk to the park and back maybe 20-30 meters away. And here is the thing; achieving the small goals regularly enabled me to make my daily goal bigger and bigger to the point that after 6 months of doing this I could again walk 5km.

In fact, my life with heart failure went so well that my dr. considered taking me off the list. Unfortunately, a month after those very words were uttered the whole system came crashing down for, I had developed a severe potassium shortage which affected my heart function. With the training my heart function improved to 35% but with the potassium shortage it dropped again to 15%. Again, I was in the hospital where my heart stood still twice the very day, I was taken in. I was back to square one and this time I was on my own because I had decided to move to Cape Town because of my improved health. After this stint in the hospital, I really struggled both physically and mentally. To top it off my appendix also had to be removed this time. Life was hard but fortunately I would not be so for long.

I was on the list for 18 months. A month and a half after my appendix were removed, I got the call on the 21st of November 2021 that there was a heart available. My donor was a young man 9 years my junior and for the first time in my life I took a blind leap of faith and said "Yes, I will take the heart."

The operation was a success and recovery in the hospital and afterwards was hard but not as hard as living with a failing heart. And for the first time in my life, I experienced living with a healthy heart. It is hard to describe. Imagine being able to swim without the ability to breathe and you know you should be able to breath, but you can't. That is what it is like to live life with a bad heart and for the first-time post-transplant I could breathe.

Breathing to such an extent that I did my first 10km run 11 months after the transplant. I still run and by the time you read this I would've completed my third 10km race. To have the ability to be physically active post-transplant is what I cherish most of my new heart. And if there is only one thing you take home from my story, I hope it is this: value your health and look after yourself for your health is a gift not only for yourself but for others as well.

Ds. Leendert Wijnja

WCTSA awarded bid to host 2024 National Transplant Games

The Western Cape are proud to announce that we have been awarded the bid to host the National Transplant Games in Cape Town in 2024. The last time the Games came to Cape Town was in 2014 and we look forward to hosting the Games in a way that will be enjoyable to each transplant family and supporter.

We have started planning and securing venues for the Games and established a Local Organising Committee that is meeting regularly to make sure everything is in place

to welcome all our athletes and their supporters to the Western Cape. We also have the full support of SATSA and have received generous funding from the National Lottery Commission to host the Nationals.

Official correspondence regarding registration for the Nationals will be distributed to the athletes from early February 2024.

The National Transplant Games will take place at various venues in and around Cape Town from **26-29 September 2024** and is open to all lifesaving organ and bone marrow/stem cell recipients and living donors.



For more information related to Transplant Sports in the Western Cape and South Africa, visit the following links to our social media and website:

<https://www.facebook.com/WCTransplantSports>

Instagram: [wc_transplantsports](https://www.instagram.com/wc_transplantsports)

www.transplantsports.org.za

OUR VISION

OUR VISION AS A PURPOSE-DRIVEN SPORTS ORGANISATION IS TO BE LEADER IN OPTIMISING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ORGAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS, AND THROUGH SPORTS AND OTHER PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES, PROMOTE ORGAN DONATION AND TRANSPLANTATION.

WWW.TRANSPLANTSPTS.ORG.ZA