

Workers for Tvl team

MINE teams today form the heart of TIRFU (Transvaal Independent Rugby Football Union).

This can be seen by the number of players who have been selected to play for Transvaal in the SA Cup - under SARU.

Seven out of fifteen players in TIRFU come from the mines. This is a great achievement considering the fact that they joined TIRFU at the beginning of this year.

Some of the players selected for Transvaal are T Kobese, O Dlamini, A Nohayi, T Biko, M Mfene and T Bonani. All the mines have recently showed a very keen desire to join SARU and meetings are held almost every week to facilitate their

affiliation.

On the local level all the teams play fixtures every week-end and on an away basis. This has meant a lot of travelling and activities for the workers during week-ends.

In the late eighties the NUM started educating workers about non-racial sport and workers responding by joining relevant bodies. Rugby teams from West Gold and Matla mines joined the TIRFU which is an affiliate of SARU.

This brought a lot of excitement and enthusiasm from workers as they were now able to play with their comrades from the townships and become part of the communities where they work.



Scenes from last year: competition will be hotter because of the mine players

Name of the game was apartheid

SPORT on the mines is used to give support to apartheid.

This has happened in athletics, boxing and rugby where some workers have participated in racist international contents inside and outside South Africa.

But black rugby has a long and proud history.

Rugby was first played in the late 18th century in the Eastern Cape and Western Cape, Border and Northern Cape. During this period rugby was played on an unorganised basis.

Non-racial basis

In 1886 organised rugby was established on a union and provincial basis. During this era rugby was played on a non-racial basis by mixed committees.

When gold was discovered the first coloured and black unions established the Transvaal Rugby Union before the whites started playing rugby.

It was during this period that the majority of our people were forced into locations without the necessary recreational, health and education facilities.

During this time white sports structures mushroomed as white municipalities provided sports

facilities from grass roots level to senior level at the expense of the African majority - hence the shortage of sporting facilities up to this day.

During the 50's black sports people were denied development in sports. Apartheid divided our communities into ethnic groups and thus destroyed the existing sport structures.

Rugby was played in the mines around Johannesburg in places like Crown Mines, Durban Deep and East Rand Mines by noted players like Grant Khomo, Sergeant Jacobs, Buti and Sinkana Mawing and Polly De Jong.

Co-option

The mines dominated all sports during that period. In the seventies the government and mine bosses came forward with a new strategy of co-option.

This was designed to counter sports sanctions against South Africa and at the same time make apartheid palatable to the outside world. Mines were then forced to play racial rugby under Dr Danie Craven.

The mine management joined an unholy alliance with Craven to co-opt mine workers into playing racial sport.

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