

# Foreword

I started playing rugby when I was 6, playing 'kaalvoet' in Sasolburg. I remember one of my first games at school, AJ Jacobs, playing 8th man, and my uncle coming to watch, promising me a rand for every try that I scored. The team did label me as "stingy" afterwards, I did not pass the ball too much that day but managed to score enough tries to treat the team to sweets and ice cream with the money I won from my uncle. I remember the derby days, the old boys and the tannies, the vetkoek and the mince, and the moms and dads shouting from the sidelines, not always understanding the laws of the game.

The game of rugby taught me values. Rugby drives home values better than any teacher or parent can. Rugby teaches you how to lose, how to win, and how you can all work together as a team. You need to be fit, which takes commitment, and fitness comes from having good value systems. Sure you can hide behind the pavilion when your coach tells you to run laps around the field, but it is always the guys that turn short of the line that fall away. You have to earn your respect. I have played with and against guys that were far more talented than me, but not always as determined.

'FNB. How can we help you?' As a bank, First National Bank are determined to keep putting their money where their mouth is, by getting involved in a whole range of school sports across this vast country of ours. And when it comes to rugby and the big derby is happening in town, our FNB branch people are there, getting involved with the school. And the passionate parents are there too, selling the boerie rolls from the

tuckshop while their kids make them proud on the field. It's a great vibe to be a part of — getting involved in something that is so much bigger than you.

The enjoyment of a derby day comes from the six, seven rows of spectators that are there watching the 4th team play. There is respect that is instilled in the individuals by the schools, and what better way to show your respect by returning to sell boerie rolls? It's not just about rugby — well, it is — but it's also about people getting together that went to the same institution. The teacher that always put you in detention at school now gives you a pat on the back. And as soon as the big game is over, you'll SMS your mate from school who now lives halfway around the world to tell him the score.

FNB's focus is not just on the big games, the top derbies, or the teams with the most support. We try to get involved wherever rugby is a passion. We are there with the 24000 other rugby-lovers at the Boishaai-Paarl Gim derby, and we are at the Klein Nederburg-New Orleans derby where you get crowds of 15000. We are also at Bergrivier-Weltevrede in Wellington — where you still get 10000 — and we then take a combined team from those two schools, and put them on a plane to play in a schools festival in Johannesburg. When the boys arrive they are nervous, but they soon learn how to ambush their larger opponents on the field. We then go to townships like Zwide in East London, where the boys play with so much passion that we actually have to calm them down before the game. For the kids, it's war.

FNB is proud of its involvement in South African school-boy rugby. 'Derby Day' is a wonderful celebration of this: the spirit of rugby that shows itself off around the country whenever 30 boys take to the field, learning to become men. This unique sporting landscape, steeped in rivalry and tradition, is something of which all South Africans can be immensely proud.

— **Francois Pienaar**

