

# Benoni

Benoni got its name because no one else wanted it. In 1881, the then Surveyor-General had trouble naming all the unclaimed state property and so presumably grabbed inspiration from where he could. He named Benoni after the Hebrew name given by Rachel to her son in the biblical Book of Genesis. The name means "son of my sorrow" in Hebrew. Benoni today has an Oscar winner (Charlize Theron), a movie based on the area (Straight Outta Benoni) and is rumored to have more horse stables per square mile than anywhere else in the Southern Hemisphere.



## Hoërskool Brandwag

### School History

In 1916 Afrikaans parents petitioned the East Rand Schools Board for the formation of Dutch-medium school for their children, and in 1917 the Nederlands Medium Skool was founded. The first head was Prof. JAS van Heerden, who later became the Rector of the Pretoria Teachers College. Brandwag is the second-oldest Afrikaans-medium school in the Gauteng province. The school started with 307 pupils in six classrooms in the Northmead suburb of Benoni. In 1929 the name of the school had been changed to Brandwag (Keeper of the Fire). Numbers were expanding fast, and by 1934 Brandwag had more than 1 000 pupils. There are still roughly 1 000 at the school. The school's headmaster is RJ Pieterse.



FOUNDED: 1917

MOTTO: WAAR WENNERS WOEKER,  
(WHERE WINNERS ARE HAPPENING)

ADDRESS: THYPHOON STREET,  
NORTHMEAD

[WWW.HSBRANDWAG.CO.ZA](http://WWW.HSBRANDWAG.CO.ZA)





*I never played Craven Week or even for the Brandwag First Team, although I always thought I was quick enough to play for the side! When I was in matric, Brandwag won the Administrator's Cup. That was an incredible achievement considering it was something like the Beeld Trophy of today, where all the best sides of Johannesburg and Pretoria compete.*

*Someone who has a similar rugby background to me today is unlikely to ever get to Craven Week. It seems the only place where a boy can develop now is at a university or rugby academy, but hardly ever at an ordinary rugby club. Professionalism has changed all this, and I find it a real pity that Craven Week has seemingly become the only stage where boys are selected and contracted."*

**— Gerrie Germishuys (1966)**



## Brandwag Rugby

Brandwag plays in the Falcons league for medium schools, and is usually one of the leading sides in that league. In 1966 Brandwag won the Administrators Cup, now called the Beeld Trophy. They repeated this success in 2002 and 2003. In 2004 they lost in the final. In 2003 they became national champions winning the Media24 championship for medium schools when they beat Afrikaans Hoër of Kroonstad 25-20 in the final at Ellis Park. Since 2007 Brandwag has played in the big schools league. In 2007 they won the Super16 when they beat Wesvalia 24-3 in the final. Brandwag regularly provides players for Craven Week. The school's traditional rivals include Oosterlig of Boksburg and Hugenote of Springs. Brandwag is particularly proud of its two Springbok alumni: Gerrie Germishuys and Johan Ackermann. Ackermann is the oldest player to have represented the Springboks at 37 years and 34 days. That was in 2007 against the Wallabies in Sydney. The tall lock accumulated 13 Test caps overall. He played his final season of professional rugby for the Sharks in 2008.

## Internationals

*South Africa:*  
Gerrie Germishuys  
Johan Ackermann

*"It's often the small traditions at school that remain the most memorable. We had a little bear dressed up in our school rugby jersey and shorts that the team would touch as we ran out onto the field. An unseen tradition, however, was the hard initiation dealt out to all new caps in the team! My fondest memory was winning the Benoni City Times trophy in our new rugby jersey, in the first year of the competition's inception."*

**— Johan Ackermann (1988)**