

Malmesbury

Malmesbury in the Swartland of the Western Cape takes its name from the oldest borough in England, Malmesbury in Wiltshire. That came about because Sir Lowry Cole, governor of the Cape, named the town after his father-in-law, Sir James Harris, the First Earl of Malmesbury. The present earl, also a James Harris, acceded to the title in 2 000 as the seventh Earl of Malmesbury. Farmers in the Swartland needed a church and started one near springs of fresh water and a warm sulphur bath (the fifth Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape) back in 1744. The town/village was then known as Zwartlands-kerk. Zwartlands? It was taken from the renosterbos (rhinoceros bush) with its black appearance. The town, some 65km north of Cape Town up the West Coast, is an agricultural centre with wheat, wine and poultry farming in the area.



Schoonspruit Senior Sekondêre Skool

School History

Schoonspruit Senior Sekondêr was founded in 1952. Its first principal was PJ Philander, one of the best Afrikaans poets who emigrated to America in 1969. In 2002 he returned from Las Vegas for a visit when his eighth book of verse was published. The present principal is CP van der Merwe, who was also the school's A-team captain as a student and A-team coach when he was a teacher. The school was at one stage the only Senior Secondary School up the West Coast and pupils came from as far afield as Vredendal and Springbok. Pupils still come from far afield and Schoonspruit has a hostel to accommodate 200 pupils. It has around 1 600 students.



FOUNDED: 1952

MOTTO: VOLHARD EN OORWIN
(STICK IT OUT AND CONQUER)

ADDRESS: DARLING ROAD,
MALMESBURY





Rugby at Schoonspruit

Schoonspruit has ten rugby teams. It is proud of its six Old Boys who have made national teams, especially McNeil Hendricks, the big Springbok wing, who had previously spent time at Wesbank Sekondêre Skool. 165 Old Boys have played provincial rugby in the SARU days. Now the school regularly produces Boland Craven Week stars. Perhaps much of this success is due to the many provincial coaches who teach at the school. Raynard de Jager and Fergie Thompson have coached Boland at Academy level, while Gilbert Oliphant, who previously played for Saru, is also coaching at Schoonspruit. Rangall Larey was also a provincial rugby coach. Mervyn Green is also an Old Boy of Schoonspruit, as is Hilton Adonis, who is the Head of Coaching Development at SARU. Although the school has had strong First XV's over the years, 1969 was perhaps its finest. 14 players in that side were selected for a Boland side largely selected from the coloured schools in the area. Some great rugby sides have also emerged from Schoonspruit in the last five years.

Rugby is strong in the Malmesbury region, with Swartland High being the other powerhouse team, besides Schoonspruit, in the domestic regional competition. The traditional derby has been against Wesbank, but recently the Piketberg fixture has gained in prominence, especially as the two schools have combined (since 2008) to form a competitive side at the St Stithians Festival at Easter. Schoonspruit is one of 20 schools in SA to have been provided with a mobile gym, to enhance their players' physical conditions, as part of a joint venture between SA Rugby and The Sports Science Institute of South Africa.

"When I was at Schoonspruit they didn't really have the kind of derbies they have today. We mainly played the Weskus schools, usually on Wednesdays. I was doing well and made Craven Week in '91. Some of my friends convinced me to come over and join the SARU federation, and from there I played for Boland in '94 and the Bulls thereafter. Coming from a poor family where I didn't have the opportunity to go to university, I really wanted to make it my vision and play professional rugby."

— MacNeil Hendricks (1989-91)

"MacNeil was a big and fast guy, and made the Craven Week Under-19 side when he was only 17. I'm not surprised he played Super 14 rugby — he just stood out whenever he took the field. Not many know this but he was actually a prolific kicker, and could boot the ball a mile."

— Raynard de Jager (coach since 1992)