

The Day the Warriors came to Town

It was a day to remember, the day the Chevrolet Warriors came to Grahamstown.

No half-measures for this Eastern Cape franchise – they invaded this educational centre in full force, with a fully-laden programme planned for the day.

Chevrolet Warriors players – captain Davy Jacobs and popular former Grahamstonian Jon-Jon Smuts included – were accompanied by a bevy of coaching, managerial and support staff.

Eastern Province Cricket CEO Dave Emslie, himself originally from these parts, renewed friendships with former team mates and adversaries in what is affectionately known as the ‘Farmers’ League’. Of course, the name Emslie is synonymous with cricket in the Albany district.

The Warriors’ first task saw them visiting Lebone Centre where General Motors, through GM Childlife makes a monthly financial and human resource contribution thus making a quantitative and qualitative difference in the lives of the vulnerable children in the Aftercare and Enrichment Programme (ACE) at the Lebone Centre.



The Warriors were then split up and visited local schools and grounds where they imparted their skills and knowledge on excited youngsters, eager to learn from players competing at a high level.

The young players attending the coaching clinics, from a variety of local schools, readily ingested the advice offered to them by the Warriors who took time off from their busy schedule of four-day and limited-overs matches to spend time with the ‘stars of the future’.



Then the focus of attention shifted to the historic City Lords ground on the Kingswood College campus for the highly-anticipated T20 match involving the Warriors players plus selected players from the country districts leagues, as well as three local schools – Graeme, Kingswood and St Andrew’s Colleges.

It was quite an occasion, and intently following proceedings were almost a thousand spectators, in the main school pupils.

Among the invited guests were fleet owners of General Motors products from Grahamstown and the sprawling district, and there were a good number of them, too.

Dean Kent, dealer principal of Kenrich Motors, the GMSA dealership in Grahamstown and Port Alfred, mingled with the guests and spectators. He was supported by several of his staff.

T20 cricket inevitably brings on the big hitting, superb fielding, the occasional lapse and varied bowling - this match in front of a vociferous crowd was no exception.

Sixes there were aplenty, a couple of run-outs dazzled the spectators, and the sheer speed of most of the bowling had them gasping.

The organisers hit on the rather brilliant idea of including senior schoolboy cricketers – thus there was a mixture of Warriors, country districts players and the schoolboys, who certainly impressed on the evening.



The schoolboy players drew huge support from their schoolmates whenever they batted, bowled and fielded. Warriors support staff had handed out scores of Warriors flags at the commencement of play, and these were being waved frantically around the ground.

A real ‘carnival’ atmosphere prevailed, and the crowd was happy and thrilled. The result of the match was unimportant, really. What mattered most was the excellent fare dished up.

It took Warriors players quite a few minutes to get to the dressing room, such was the demand for their autographs on flags, T-shirts and caps, as well as requests for posed photographs.

At the post-match function, Dean Kent said it was “awesome” having the Chevrolet Warriors in town, and thanked Eastern Province Cricket and General Motors SA for their support.

Dave Emslie then announced that it was hoped the Chevrolet Warriors’ visit to Grahamstown would be repeated next year.

