



Hannah Prince.



Kealeboga Maroganye.

# Gala won by the Dryads

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Applauds, cheers and war cries dominated Parktown High School for Girls' swimming gala on January 24.

Headmistress Gail Davidson said the gala was a success.

"So many girls were fully involved by dressing up in house colours and cheering on their teams," she added.

"The beautiful sunny day made jumping into the pool a welcome relief and the spectacular array of bright colours was worthy of a masterpiece painting."

Davidson said inter-house events such as the gala played a role in creating school spirit, which was wonderful to witness and take part in. This was part of the holistic, all-round education that the school offers

their athletes.

She added the gala traditionally culminated with three events including 'an awe-inspiring diving display and a rather enthusiastic yet controversial staff vs matric water polo game.'

"The Grade 12s then get to make a big splash as they sit around the pool chanting their house names and finally jump in dressed in their pyjamas."

Overall, it was a happy, day filled with war cries, laughter, and fun concluded the headmistress.

**Interhouse Gala Placings:**

- **1st:** Dryads (120 points)
- **2nd:** Nereids (100 points)
- **3rd :** Alseids (93 points)
- **4th:** Pleiades (89 points)
- **5th:** Oreads (87 points)
- **6th:** Hesperides (78 points).

# Matrics earn their passports to the future by gaining a second chance

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Education is often described as the passport to the future.

That future can seem uncertain for learners who don't achieve the marks they hoped for in matric. The ORT SA Second Chance Programme is a lifeline for young South Africans aiming to turn their academic setbacks into triumphs.

This intensive programme focuses on maths and physical science, equipping learners with the tools to rewrite their National Senior Certificate (NSC) exams and unlock opportunities in Stem fields. It has already produced remarkable results, with learners improving their scores by up to 40%.

## A second shot at success

One shining example is 18-year-old Siyabonga Gambu from Vosloorus, whose story is a testament to perseverance.

"I was always a hard-working learner but my 2023 matric results weren't enough to get me into varsity," Siyabonga shared. Determined to avoid stagnation, he joined the programme to improve his APS score.

The programme's disciplined structure and supportive teachers paid off. Siyabonga's mathematics marks improved from 68% to 77%, while his physics score jumped from 64% to 71%.

"ORT helped me academically and personally. It gave me hope that I could still make it to varsity. My teachers and friends inspired me to push through, even after losing my brother last year. I just wanted to make my mother proud."

Siyabonga dreams of pursuing a medical,

physiotherapy, or mining engineering career. He's already paying it forward by mentoring future programme participants, proving that success is also about uplifting others.

## Rising above adversity

Another standout learner, 25-year-old Katiso Mabothe, exemplifies how persistence pays off. After failing to qualify for his desired tertiary courses, Mabothe joined the programme to rewrite his story.

Inspired by his childhood dream of becoming a chartered accountant, Mabothe improved his mathematics score from 36% to an impressive 69%.

"ORT reminded me that my goals were still within reach," he said. "This journey taught me that success isn't about how many times you fall but how many times you rise."

Despite challenges like financial struggles and self-doubt, Mabothe's discipline and focus led him to a bright future. He's now actively applying to study a BCom Accounting, hoping to one day inspire other young South Africans.

## Lighting the way for others

Ariellah Rosenberg, CEO of ORT SA, celebrates the programme's impact. "The success of these pupils proves that with hard work and the right support, the unachievable becomes achievable. Second Chance has brought hope to communities, showing youth their dreams are valid."

ORT SA inspires through the success of learners such as Siyabonga and Mabothe, who are changing their futures and also bringing hope to their communities.

Their stories remind us that setbacks are just the start of a new chapter.

G O A T P B N C  
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