



An African summer

The eyes of the world are fixed on South Africa as teams from around the globe compete in the football World Cup. And South African Guiding is playing its part...

On dusty pitches throughout South Africa, children are practising their penalties and bending it like Beckham. Advertising hoardings are emblazoned with huge World Cup posters, and for months countdown clocks across the country have been ticking away the

minutes to the tournament, which kicked off on 11 June and ends on 11 July with a dazzling final.

Mpho Motale is WAGGGS' Centenary Ambassador for the Girl Guides Association of South Africa (GGASA), and she says football fever

has been sweeping South Africa for months.

'Every Friday more and more people have answered the call of the country to support the World Cup by putting on the shirt of Bafana Bafana (the nickname for the national team)

– even at school. Friday has become green and yellow day.'

Sally O'Neill, WAGGGS' Global Operations Director, is one member who has certainly been looking forward to the football. 'The Africa Regional Conference starts in Madagascar at the end of June, so it will be fascinating to be in Africa during the South African World Cup. As a huge football fan, I can't wait!'

As South Africa welcomes the teams and the fans, Guiding units around the country have been trying to get the girls involved through their

programmes. 'In our unit,' says Mpho, 'we've been teaching girls the 2010 World Cup Diski Dance. Diski means soccer in township language and the dance is choreographed using aspects of dribbling soccer ball techniques. The girls can gain their Guide Dancer badge through this.'

In a broader way, the GGASA is using the World Cup as a chance to get across important messages. 'Guiding will use the World Cup as a platform to educate girls on the subject of people-trafficking,' explains Mpho.

Indeed, Guiding in South Africa

faces many such important issues. It's a large country and poverty is widespread. Locally, work often focuses on community service such as caring for children orphaned through HIV/AIDS, and tackling serious issues such as gender violence using games to teach important lessons.

And – just as in the UK – one of the fundamental aims of Guiding in South Africa is to empower girls and young women. 'We focus on skills development, leadership development and challenging young people to tap into their potential,' says Mpho. >>

WORDS: Jane Yettram. PICTURES: GGASA, WAGGGS

Mini quiz: Football fan or football failure?

How much do you know about the beautiful game?



- 1) **The goalkeeper is not allowed to:**
 - a) Pick up a back pass from a team-mate
 - b) Score a goal
 - c) Cry when the opposition scores
- 2) **Before the 19th century, footballs were made of:**
 - a) Pigs' bladders
 - b) Turnips
 - c) Christmas puddings
- 3) **WAGs are/is:**
 - a) The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts
 - b) Wingers and goalies
 - c) Wives and girlfriends of football players
- 4) **The crossbar challenge is:**
 - a) Trying to ride a 'man's' bicycle while wearing a skirt
 - b) Trying to get to the ladies in a packed pub
 - c) Trying to hit the crossbar of the goal with a shot
- 5) **'To nutmeg' means:**
 - a) To sprinkle spice on your cappuccino
 - b) To kick the ball between your opponent's legs
 - c) To head-butt your opponent



What's the score?

- 1 a) 1 b) 0 c) 0
- 2 a) 1 b) 0 c) 0
- 3 a) 0 b) 0 c) 1
- 4 a) 0 b) 0 c) 1
- 5 a) 0 b) 1 c) 0

Match result

- 4-5: Premiership player
2-3: Mid-fielder
0-1: Bottom of the league

As here, there are four sections: Teddies (4½-7), Brownies (7-10), Guides (10-14) and Rangers (14-young adult). And they love to camp, hike and holiday just like UK members.

In South Africa too, Guiding is celebrating its Centenary, though its profile is not as high as South African members would like. 'We sometimes still have to refer to being sisters to the Scout Association for people to realise who we are and what we do,' says Mpho.

South Africa's Guiding story began in 1910 with a Guide company in Johannesburg. A decade later, Guiding had spread across the country. And since the death of apartheid in the mid-1990s it has forged ahead.

'Since the end of apartheid, the organisation has changed, particularly from a leadership perspective,' says Rosemary Swemmer, GGASA National Director. 'We have a more diverse group of Leaders, the majority of them being black, which is completely in line with the demographics of the country.'

Mpho Motale agrees. 'We embrace cultural diversity and all groups are involved in decision making.'

South African Guiding, though, has always fought for inclusivity, even during the dark years of apartheid. Isabella Direko played her part in the struggle for freedom and became a member of the South African parliament in the first multi-racial



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elections in 1994. Isabella had joined Guiding in the 1930s at the age of five and later became a Leader. She was Chief Commissioner from 1992 to 1997 – the first black woman in South Africa to hold the position – and National President of the GGASA from 1998 to 2003.

Says Isabella: 'Without a doubt, I owe my success to the education, training and support I received from the Girl Guides, particularly the courageous Guiding women who, while the black people were being controlled and repressed, encouraged and helped me to be strong and assertive, who inspired me to help others as I had been helped, and who gave me the courage to overcome all obstacles to triumph in the end.' ■



Sporting chance

One thing sport and guiding have in common is the ability to bring people together.

South Africa's own hero, former President Nelson Mandela, recipient of the first WAGGS World Citizenship Award in 1996, recognised the bonding power of sport when he used the 1995 Rugby World Cup to unite the country, as dramatised in the recent award-winning film *Invictus*.

And Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General, believes sport to be 'a universal language'. 'At its best,' he says, 'it can bring people together, no matter what their origin, background, religious beliefs or economic status. And when young people participate in sports or have access to physical education, they can experience real exhilaration even as they learn the ideals of teamwork and tolerance.'



UK Guides practise their skills (above), proving they can beat the boys at their own game. And girls in South Africa (main picture and far left) thrive through the activities Guiding offers

Love football? Do fun activities and learn more about passing and penalties with *Go For It! Football* (£3.50, order code 6675)