

OP Veterinary Science Faculty soccer team crowned as Spring Day soccer league champions

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Prof Cheryl De La Rey, UP Vice-Chancellor and Principal with David Komane after handing over the trophy to the victorious soccer champions

“We wanted to make the Faculty proud and give something back for the support and the positive response we received from the Dean and the Departments when we founded this team in 2015.” Speaking on behalf of the OP Soccer team is David Komane, co-founder with Jerry Letsoalo of a team that was only founded last year, and who indeed made the faculty proud by winning the soccer league at the annual UP Spring Day celebration event.

Maybe it was a sign for what was to come when, in the week before Spring Day, the team played two friendly games against teams from the Reserve Bank and the Government Communication and Information Service (GCIS) and convincingly won both with 4-2 and 9-3 respectively.

These victories inspired them to do even better. According to David they knew that no staff soccer team of OP has won any trophy before so the aim was to go and win something for the faculty. They also realised it was a do or die situation in the knock-out stages of the Spring Day competition because if you lose one game you are out. Before reaching the final they not only beat teams from Engineering, Food Services, and Finance but in the process were also victorious against Shaun Bartlett’s Tuks Sport team who they beat 2-0.

The final against UP Proefplaas was a nail biting affair which kept the supporters on the edge of their seats (or the playing field). The two teams eventually played to a draw which led to a penalty shootout. The OP Soccer team claimed the trophy by winning the shootout 2-1. It was a proud and special moment when the trophy was handed to the team by Prof Cheryl De La Rey, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Pretoria.

Back at the OP Campus a victory parade around the campus was organised followed by a short ceremony during which the trophy was handed to the Deputy Dean: Teaching and Learning, Prof Dietmar Holm (see below) who acted on behalf of the Dean, Prof Darrell Abernethy, who was away on official duty. This bodes well for the future of the OP Soccer team with a last word belonging to a confident David: “We will do all we can to try and keep this trophy as long as possible.”

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