

Survey points to Chester Williams as favourite for Springbok coach

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Chester Williams is the favourite for the new Springbok coach, according to a recent Synovate survey where respondents were asked their opinions on a number of issues recently confronting the national teams.

Rugby

27% of the respondents pointed to Williams as the new coach, selecting him out of the current shortlist. Next in line was Heyneke Meyer with 22% of respondents supporting his appointment. Heyneke Meyer has been pinpointed as the favourite in recent press. Jake White's choice, Allister Coetzee, received only 9% of the votes.

Only 41% of rugby fans interviewed believe that the Springbok team will continue to be the great team that grabbed the World Cup in October last year, post Jake White. However an overwhelming 78% believe that the Springboks will build on its foundation. The good news for the current rugby captain is that only a quarter of those interviewed believe that he should be replaced.

When looking at the administration side of the national rugby team, more than half (51%) disagree with the statement that rugby administrators are capable and competent in running SARU. This sentiment is most pronounced amongst Durban respondents. A bulky 56% do not agree that enough is being done to develop the sport amongst the youth and this is most strongly expressed in the black community and younger age groups.

The interesting and controversial question of player selection yielded 92% of the respondents agreeing that players should be selected on merit and not race – most strongly expressed by Indian respondents.

Cricket

Out of the 750 respondents interviewed for the entire survey, 290 indicated that they followed local cricket.

69% agreed that Graham Smith has proven himself as the right man to captain the Proteas, despite suggestions of his inconsistency. This sentiment was most notable amongst Gauteng respondents. Two thirds agreed with the statement that Mickey Arthur is a great coach. The local cricket team has performed well under his instruction, although this has been most pronounced at home matches. The test for Arthur will certainly be the upcoming India, England and Australia away matches in 2008.

Cricket administration received the thumbs up – 73% of respondents agreeing that administrators are capable and competent. However, only 46% felt positive about the fact that enough has been done to develop the sport amongst the youth.

The 'Most Exciting Player' vote went to Jacques Kallis and Makhaya Ntini respectively.

When asked whether the cricket team's name should change from the Protea's, responses were overwhelmingly met with a no. Only 12% believed that it should and suggestions for the new name were mostly towards calling the team the 'Springboks' in alignment with the local rugby team.

A comparatively higher amount (42%) believed that the cricket uniform could do with a change.

Soccer

Soccer supporters are most likely to support a name change from Bafana Bafana, perhaps after Mbeki's recent appeal that the name was not appropriate for a national sports team. This is most notable amongst Cape Town respondents. Almost half (45%) believe that the uniform should change to resemble the green and gold of the Springbok team. Currently, the uniform is more gold than it is green and it has been suggested that this be reversed.

With the fast approaching 2010 World Cup, 57% of the sample believed that Bafana Bafana will make us proud at the tournament, and almost a third believe that the team are showing signs of improvement. However, it is widely believed that Carlos Parreira's salary is not a fair salary – this is most notable in the Indian community.

Looking at soccer administration, most of the sample believed that it is competent and capable of running the PSL. However, as with the cricket and rugby teams, soccer supporters do not believe that enough is being done to develop the youth. This is a concern against the fact that money is being spent on bringing in foreign players into the big soccer teams.

About the Survey

Fieldwork for this survey was conducted between the 13th and 21st November 2007. 750 respondents were contacted, all residing in the major metropolitan areas Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. Respondents were made up of rugby, cricket and soccer enthusiasts.

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