

# NEMATO

Change a life

*success in life – for youth, by youth*

Newsletter, 8 May 2013, issue 4

## **NELSON MANDELA TOWNSHIP YOUTH EMPOWERMENT & SPORT**

Imagine, at the start of the year not a single Nemato member had ever travelled outside South Africa. Early this year our student in Johannesburg, Athenkosi Hlekani, went to Qatar for a United Nations Youth Leadership Camp. Now he is in Belgium as coach of a junior rowing team. Three of our gymnasts flew to Johannesburg for the first of two trials for World Age Groups, the gymnastics junior world championships. Are we going to see more members travelling overseas? Wouldn't that be fantastic? Nemato is going international! Nemato is changing lives! Well, it doesn't always come easy, as you'll read in this newsletter.

## **NEMATO CHANGE A LIFE**

### **Improving the organisation**

If any organisation for youth empowerment in South Africa ever claims a 100% success rate, don't trust them. It is very hard and difficult work, and no matter how hard you try and how many great successes you can claim, there will always be challenges and disappointments. One of our disappointments was that the manager of the venue where we had our camp complained about bad behaviour of our members.

Nemato Change a Life is for youth, by youth. The camp was organised by members and run by members. The freedom our members get to organise and run the organisation is an important part of learning for success in life, but it comes with a risk. It can be abused easily. Often it goes right, but this time it went wrong.

A lot of discussions followed. The conclusions were that our programme is good, but the members are not doing well enough. We need to offer more guidance and the older members need to take more responsibility. As with every challenge, it is an opportunity to improve. By learning the hard way, Nemato Change a Life is getting better and better.

### **Impact assessment**

Laura Bijkerk is a teacher student at Stenden who is doing research in our maths class to assess the impact of our classes and compare different alternative teaching systems to advise us how to improve. At the same time she is volunteering at our

class and feeding us with educational ideas. With too few and untrained people running our classes, her help and research is of great assistance to us.

### **Advisory Board**

Only with support from many people and organisations, we can help our members to become successful in life. To strengthen our network and to get the best possible advice for ways forward for Nemato Change a Life, we invited a small group of people to form our Advisory Board. We are very



*Laura Bijkerk teaching at our maths class*

proud that the first person to accept our invitation for the Advisory Board and its annual meeting on Youth Day was Dr. Saleem Badat, the Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University. We are sure our small organisation will be able to play a stronger role in debating and piloting youth empowerment and education for a better future for our country.

### Auditing

The 2012 bookkeeping of Nemato Change a Life and our four sports clubs have been audited. We are proud that we passed the test again with unqualified audit reports.

### Annual General Meetings

We had five Annual General Meetings for Nemato Change a Life and our four sports clubs. New board members have been elected. Nemato Rowing Club approved a new constitution to get the club in line with requirements for non-profit organisations. Nemato Change a Life approved the proposal to support the three year development plan for the gymnastics club.

## NEMATO ROWING CLUB

### Athi in Belgium

We are very proud that our student at the University of Johannesburg, Athenkosi Hlekani, is overseas again. Earlier in the year he was the only South African at a United Nations Youth Leadership Camp in Qatar, this time he is in Belgium as the coach of a junior rowing team. We are very excited that he gets these opportunities to travel overseas. We are looking forward to see him back in Port Alfred next year, with all the experience and knowledge he gained at university and travelling abroad, to lead our organisation and change more lives than ever before.

### PE branch

Our older rowers, studying in Port Elizabeth, are struggling to get the PE branch of our rowing club back in action. Long distances in PE make it difficult to get to rowing sessions, but there is something else: In Port Alfred there is a new programme hanging on the fridge every week, and when you don't come to the sessions, it gets recorded on the attendance register. In PE the students have to organise and motivate



*Athi coaching his team for competition in Belgium*

themselves. It's easy to be lazy. Guys, wake up! It takes initiative, hard work and self motivation to become successful in life.

## NEMATO GYMNASTICS CLUB



*Our three gymnasts at the airport on the way to trials*

### WAG Trials

Three gymnasts flew to Johannesburg for the first of two trials for World Age Groups (WAG), the Junior World Championships for gymnastics. After just over a month of training over the weekends at Mandy's Tumbling and Trampoline School in Port Elizabeth, the boys might not yet be ready to qualify for WAG, but they already impressed the crowd, who had never heard of Nemato before. Until last year the most difficult routine ever done by a Nemato gymnast at competition on the double mini trampoline was a front somersault with a half twist, followed by a back somersault. After one month at Mandy's, this record is up to a double somersault with a half twist followed by a double back somersault. If we keep progressing at this phenomenal pace, there is a good chance that Nemato will have gymnasts going to international competition before the end of the year!

Anyway, it is great to have gymnasts who get a chance to experience flying, travelling on the Gautrain and competing at the highest level in the country.

### Three year plan

The WAG trials and training for it form the start of a three year plan to transform our gymnastics club into one of the top clubs in the country. We are tired of people talking about all our raw talent. We have to get the skills and facilities to develop our talent and give our gymnasts the opportunities to go all the

way to the national and international top. For three years Mandy, whose daughter won silver twice at World Championships, will work very closely with us to train our top gymnasts and our coaches. We also need proper trampolines, a tumbling track and a hall. This, including travelling to overseas competitions, is costing a lot of money. We hope to find a club sponsor who shares our vision and is keen to make Nemato Gymnastics Club a unique club where disadvantaged youth with no future can change their lives and become world stars.

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## NEMATO HANDBALL CLUB

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### Ready to play

After years of struggling with low attendance and apathy, our handball club has miraculously changed into a fireball of energy. The training sessions are full of fun and excitement and the club is growing fast. If it doesn't stop growing, it will become our biggest club before the end of the year! Although handball isn't really a girls' sport, in our club it is. We only have girls playing it and it has pulled all the girls from our other sports. That is not ideal, but at last we have a club that is exciting the girls and pulling them into our organisation. Let's use the magic of the moment.

### Kit

The handball club doesn't have kit. To play matches, the members have to try to find clothes that match. Now that the club is serious about training, we have to become serious about playing matches. One of the most committed supporters of our organisation, Andrew Craig, and his wife Sasha Stevenson, surprised us with a generous donation collected at their



*Handball training session in the township*

wedding party, and agreed to buy kit for the team. Fantastic! Thanks a lot to everybody who contributed!

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## NEMATO FENCING CLUB

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### Training for competition

Our fencers are training for a competition on 27 and 28 July in

Bonnievale in the Western Cape. It is still a long time to go, but definitely a great trip to train hard for and to look forward to!

## CONTACT DETAILS

### Nemato Change a Life

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### Our supporters

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