

Tzaneen

Tzaneen comes from the Sotho word "Tsaneng", which loosely translated means "the place where people gather". To early German cartographers the sound -ts, as in "Tsaneng", became -t as in Tzaneen. The town is situated in the foothills of the impressive Wolkberg (Cloud Mountain), the northern reaches of the Drakensberg Mountain range, in the Limpopo Province. It is an attractive subtropical garden town with a colourful profusion of indigenous and exotic flowers and vegetation. Just about everything grows here in abundance - nuts, avocados, mangoes, bananas, litchis, coffee, tea and cotton. There is lots to do visit archaeological sites, the biggest baobab tree in the country, nature reserves and the Tzaneen Museum, which is made up of ethnological artifacts of the area. Or you can catch a local derby rugby game between Ben Vorster and HS Merensky.



Ben Vorster High School



FOUNDED: 1962
MOTTO: STRY TOT OORWINNING
(STRIVE TO OVERCOME)
ADDRESS: 1 GRENS ST,
TZANEEN
WWW.BENVORSTER.CO.ZA



School History

Hoërskool Ben Vorster was established in 1962 with 479 pupils. Today it is a school with 924 enrolled learners. At present it functions as a dual-medium school where learners are taught in both Afrikaans and English. Ben Vorster is a dynamic school on all fronts. The school has recently achieved its finest academic, sporting and cultural results in its history. The school is exceptionally well equipped, boasting facilities such as a modern gymnasium, a heated swimming pool, an all-weather cricket facility, an indoor hockey field, a dance academy as well as an auditorium for performing arts.

Rugby at Ben Vorster

Though Tzaneen may be removed from the bigger rugby centres in South Africa, it is not short of passionate and good rugby. Ben Vorster has, over the years, produced exceptional rugby sides on par with any sides around. It has a list of achievements. In 1969 it was the provincial winner and quarter finalist in the Director's Trophy. In 1987 it was again the provincial winner and this time reached the semi-finals of the Director's Trophy. Since 2004 Ben Vorster has produced particularly strong sides. It won the provincial league in 2004, 2006 and 2007, while reaching the Beeld Trophy quarter-finals in 2004, 2005 and 2007. In 2006 it shared the Beeld Trophy with Merensky in the medium-schools section, but since 2007 has entered the big-schools section. Alec Mhlanga and Trevor Nyakane were chosen for the SA Schools Academy side in 2007. Both players, as well as Glen Mafumo and Patrick Oosthuizen, are currently contracted to the Cheetahs. In the last four years alone, 24 players have been selected for Craven Week, where Kallie Erasmus and Eugene Pohl were both selected as captains. Andre Hay has coached the First XV since 2000.



"In 2002, some Ben Vorster coaches had seen me playing at Gravalotte Primary school and I also made the Under-13 Craven Week side that year. I was offered a bursary to come and play rugby at Hoërskool Ben Vorster. Rugby wasn't all that important to me at the time, but when I got to my new school, rugby suddenly got more serious! From better coaching to rugby traditions, the school just emphasised rugby so much more. I really wanted to play First Team, and did so; looking back, that move to Ben Vorster was a good move and changed the direction of my future."

— Alec Mhlanga (2006-07)

"Andre Hay has been really involved in my rugby and was instrumental in getting me to where I am today. When I was at Hentie Celliers in my Standard 9 year, Andre asked me if I was interested in coming back home to Limpopo as it would be a wise rugby move. It turned out to be just that as I then got into the Limpopo Craven Week side, and from there played for the Falcons. After captaining the Falcons at Under-19 and Under-21 level, I am now at the Cheetahs. Andre is an excellent and wise coach. He's great with the players, and in fact was very much involved in getting myself and three other Ben Vorster Old Boys to the Cheetahs."

— Patrick Oosthuizen (2005)

"The big event of the year is the derby against Merensky. Ben Vorster is right in the middle of Tzaneen, and Merensky just outside. It is a typical local derby where everything seems to be riding on the result. The game has plenty of hype, with a big braai and get-together on the Friday, as well as cheerleaders and thousands who come to support on the Saturday."

I wasn't always a sporty person, but that soon changed when I arrived at Ben Vorster. I got stuck into rugby and the school gave me the opportunities to go to Grant Khomo Week, Craven Week, and represent the SA Academy. Ben Vorster set me up for a future in rugby."

— Trevor Nyakane (2005-07)

"Merensky had a great side in 2006. Over the years we had had beaten them most times, but that year we had lost an early game and were under pressure to win. They also had plenty of support and came into the game with some good wins behind them. After a hard and physical game, the result was a draw. Then whole occasion was special, and looking back from where I came — a black school that offered no sport and where the closest I came to rugby was watching it on the television — it is incredible how the school has set up my future."

— Glen Mafumo (2005-07)