



LIONS

DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

ROAR MAGAZINE CSI EDITION

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DP WORLD



LIONS



DP WORLD

WANDERERS
STADIUM

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EDITORS NOTE



As we wrapped up another action-packed year, one filled with big swings, bold partnerships, and the occasional rain delay, it's a perfect time to look back at the innings we've played beyond the pitch. After all, at Lions Cricket, our impact doesn't end when the stumps are pulled out. Through the Lions Development Foundation, we've spent the year proving that real champions aren't only made in the nets, but in the hearts of our communities.

From empowering young talent to giving local programmes the support they need to hit their own sixes, our Corporate Social Investment work has been nothing short of a well-placed cover drive purposeful and headed straight to the boundary. We've seen communities grow, kids find their stride, and partners step up to the crease with us to help create safe, inspiring spaces where dreams can take guard. In these pages, you'll find snapshots of the wins that didn't make the scoreboard but certainly made a difference, projects that

bowled us over, stories that reminded us why we do what we do, and moments that proved that when the Lions roar together, the whole stadium feels it. So, here's to a year of playing with heart, uplifting with purpose, and proving that social impact is truly a team sport. As we stride into the next season, pads on and spirits high, we're ready to keep smashing goals, breaking boundaries, and, of course, keeping our eye on the ball.

Together, we're building communities, creating opportunities, and making sure that every child, no matter where they come from, can step up to life's crease with confidence.

As we look forward to 2026 let's flip the page and relive the highlights.

LIONS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

LIONS DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION PILLARS

1. EDUCATION
2. HEALTH
3. JOB CREATION & ACCESS TO INCOME
4. SPECIAL PROJECTS



CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT REFLECTION

By Jono Leaf-Wright

Dear Pride,

At the heart of the Lions Development Foundation lies a deep commitment to nurturing, uplifting, and empowering learners—both on and off the field. Through education, play, and educational play, our Corporate Social Investment initiatives continue to create meaningful opportunities that extend far beyond sport.

By investing in individuals and their support systems, we have built an admirable partnership between South Africa's Best Sports Organisation and committed, passionate learners who are developing the skills to lead, love, live, and learn with purpose. Together, we are shaping futures—and we are immensely proud of the impact achieved.

Throughout the year, our Pride delivered impactful initiatives including stationery drives, Easter egg hunts, food-packing programmes, career days, educational support for higher learning, and a women's empowerment workshop. These initiatives were guided by experts who shared not only their knowledge and experience, but also genuine care—because every individual deserves the opportunity to excel, and every community thrives when built together.

I firmly believe that when you love what you do, excellence follows. The Lions Cricket family works tirelessly, passionately, and proudly to ensure that doors are opened and pathways are carved. Growth does not happen



overnight—it is built ball by ball, through both wins and losses. Witnessing the growth of those we serve is without doubt, the most rewarding aspect of leadership.

To everyone who contributed to the success of our 2025 CSI programmes: your commitment, kindness, and energy resulted in tangible outcomes and sustainable impact. Together, we confronted challenges head-on and worked collaboratively toward community well-being for our future.

To our valued partners: We are grateful for your passionate and loyal partnership and for walking this journey with us—making dreams a reality, one learner at a time.

As we look to the future, we remain steadfast in our commitment to creating opportunity, unlocking potential, and building a stronger society. To every learner we support: work hard, remain humble, #LoveWhatYouDo, and know that Lions Cricket and the Lions Development Foundation stand with you—every ball, every innings.

Here's to pursuing 2026 with purpose, unity, and ambition.

Let us continue to ROAR loud and proud—and always, always dream big.

Your excited and proud CEO,

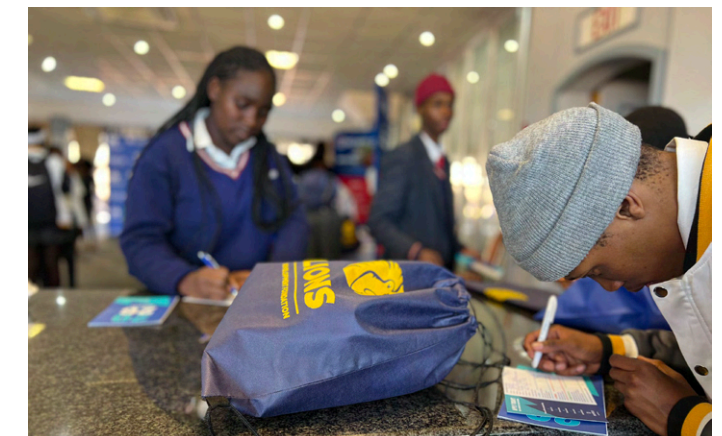
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jono Leaf-Wright".

Jono Leaf-Wright



SCHOOLS OPEN DAY

The Power of Education: Why We Champion the Future of Our Players



STATIONERY DROP OFF

**Supporting Learning Through Action:
Our Visit to Eastbank High School**

Our visit to Eastbank High School, with a special focus on the senior students, formed an important part of our ongoing commitment to community development and education through our CSI programme. During this engagement, we successfully executed a stationery handover initiative designed to uplift and support learners as they progress through their academic journeys.

The primary goal of this initiative is to assist under-resourced schools by providing essential learning materials that many learners may not easily access. By addressing the shortage of basic stationery, we aim to create a more

conducive learning environment, one in which students feel equipped, motivated, and empowered to excel.

The handover included a variety of essential items such as school bags, notepads, pencils, rulers, and other fundamental supplies. These resources may seem simple, yet they have the power to remove barriers to learning, boost confidence, and encourage consistent classroom participation.

Through initiatives like this, we reaffirm our belief that every learner deserves the tools and opportunities needed to succeed. Education remains a cornerstone of personal and community growth, and we are proud to play a role in supporting the bright futures of the students at Eastbank High School and many of our affiliated schools.

Thank you to Stationery Express for their continued support of the Stationery Drop off initiative.

Our commitment extends far beyond the boundary ropes. We recognise that every young person who enters our system carries dreams that reach further than the cricket field. For this reason, education forms a central pillar of our community and player-development initiatives. It is not simply an obligation, it is a responsibility we embrace with purpose and pride.

In partnership with Richfield, SAICA, and the University of Johannesburg, we welcomed more than 400 students affiliated with Lions Cricket to the DP World Wanderers Stadium for a dedicated career day, students had an opportunity to enrol for 2026 university studies. This initiative was created to offer learners the guidance, access, and support they need to pursue higher education. For many, it was an opportunity to explore new fields of study, receive career insights, and apply to institutions that can shape their future.

Our investment in education is rooted in the belief that every young person deserves the chance to

grow academically, personally, and professionally. While cricket can open doors, education ensures that those doors lead to sustainable and meaningful opportunities. By empowering our players with knowledge and career readiness, we help them build a foundation that will support their ambitions both on and off the field.

We do this work because we care deeply about the holistic development of our youth. We want each player to understand that their value extends beyond their sporting talents, and that education is a powerful tool, one that enriches their lives, broadens their perspectives, and prepares them for a future filled with possibility. As we continue to invest in our communities, we remain proud of the role we play in guiding young people toward brighter, more empowered futures. Education is not just important, it is transformative. And by nurturing it, we honour our commitment to shaping well-rounded individuals who can lead, inspire, and uplift the world around them.





A NEW HOME FOR GROWTH: THE CUBS DEN OPENING

On the 27th of February, the stadium's Western Pavilion came alive with excitement as the community gathered to celebrate the official opening of the Cubs Den, a vibrant new digital space designed with the future of our young players in mind. More than just a room filled with technology, the Cubs Den represents one of our key developmental initiatives, created to empower the next generation with the skills, confidence, and tools needed to thrive in an ever-evolving digital world.

Thoughtfully equipped and warmly welcoming, the space offers far more than screens and keyboards. It provides opportunity. Here, young players can complete homework and assignments while waiting for their net sessions, turning what was once idle time into moments of learning, creativity, and personal growth. The Cubs Den bridges the gap between academic commitment and sporting ambition—ensuring that our players not only grow on the field, but beyond it.

The opening of the Cubs Den marks a significant milestone in our commitment to holistic learner development. Equipped with reliable WiFi connectivity provided by **Telkom**, the Cubs Den is a dedicated digital learning space designed to support our learners both on and off the field. While the stadium remains a place for sporting excellence, this new environment ensures that when learners arrive, they also have access to a space that nurtures education, personal development, and digital literacy. In an ever-evolving digital world, access to technology is no longer a luxury but a necessity. Through Telkom's invaluable support, the Cubs Den empowers our learners to engage with digital resources, expand their knowledge, and prepare for future opportunities beyond sport. We extend our sincere appreciation to **Telkom** for enabling this platform and for their continued commitment to driving growth, inclusion, and development within the cricket space.

A CELEBRATION OF JOY: CSI'S ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

Each year, Lions Cricket brings the spirit of Easter to life through one of our most anticipated traditions—the Annual Easter Egg Hunt. What began as a simple seasonal activity has grown into a vibrant celebration of community, connection, and childhood wonder. Today, it stands as one of our most beloved initiatives, touching the lives of 300 to 400 children from our hubs and partner schools every Easter season.

The goal of the Easter Egg Hunt has always been clear: to create a fun, engaging, and inclusive experience where every child feels welcome and excited. Beyond searching for brightly coloured eggs, the event fosters a sense of belonging, encourages physical activity, and offers young participants the chance to explore, imagine, and delight in the magic of play.

To ensure fairness and the best possible experience, children are grouped by age



and guided to designated search areas each filled with hidden eggs packed with chocolates and small treats. The cheers, laughter, and eager footsteps that follow are the true measure of the event's success.

Year after year, this gathering transforms our space into lively scenes of joy. Children interact with peers, build memories, and embrace the simple pleasure of discovery in a safe, welcoming environment, a reminder of the power of community and the happiness that comes from bringing children together.

As Lions Development Foundation, we are proud to host an event that captures the essence of childhood and strengthens our ties with the communities we serve. The smiles we see each year make every moment worthwhile.

A massive thank you to Beyers Chocolate for making every easter an Egg-cellent one.



How DP World Lions and Temba Bavuma Are Helping to Fight Blood Cancer

BY MEN'S HEALTH | MAY 28, 2025 | HEALTH



At the DP World Wanderers Stadium, where legends are made and cricket glory unfolds, a different kind of moment played out—one not measured in runs or wickets but in compassion and hope.

WORLD BLOOD CANCER DAY INITIATIVE

In recognition of **World Blood Cancer Day**, observed annually on **28 May**, the organisation hosted a special awareness and engagement initiative in partnership with **DKMS**. The initiative centred around **Iminathi**, a 14-year-old patient living with **Fanconi Anaemia** and an avid cricket enthusiast.

Cricket has played a significant role in supporting Iminathi throughout his health journey. One of his role models, **Temba Bavuma**, has been a source of inspiration to him. As part of the initiative, Iminathi's wish to meet and spend time with Temba Bavuma was fulfilled. He was treated to a behind-the-scenes stadium tour and had the opportunity to participate in a cricket session with the **Lions players**.

In addition to fulfilling Iminathi's wish, the event included an educational session for staff, aimed at raising awareness about blood cancers and providing information on the **DKMS** donor registry, including how staff can register to potentially save a life.

This initiative contributed both to enhancing awareness of blood cancers and to reinforcing the organisation's commitment to meaningful community impact.

MANDELA DAY FOOD PACKING INITIATIVE

In honour of Nelson Mandela and his legacy of service, Lions Cricket hosted its annual Mandela Day Food Packing Event on 18 July. This year marked the highest turnout since the initiative's inception, reflecting growing employee engagement and commitment to community support.

In partnership with Humanitarian organisation Ashrafu Aid to address the ongoing challenge of food scarcity, which continues to affect vulnerable households

across South Africa. Through the collaborative efforts of staff volunteers and our partners, a total of 5,000 food parcels were packed and distributed to various communities across Gauteng.

This initiative reinforced our dedication to tackling food insecurity and supporting sustainable community well-being, while upholding the spirit of Ubuntu embodied by Nelson Mandela





WOMEN'S MONTH INITIATIVE MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

This year, under the national theme “Building Resilient Women,” the Lions Development Foundation launched a month-long initiative dedicated to uplifting young women across our cricket pathways. The initiative sought not only to celebrate Women’s Month but also to create meaningful and lasting impact beyond August.

The initiative saw four of our DP World Lions Professional Women’s players, namely Sarah Nettelton, Ayabonga Khakha, Raisibe Ntozakhe step up to the fore to mentor young and upcoming players from a personal and also cricket perspective, we are truly thankful to these players and support of the womens management team who assisted in ensuring that this project kicks off smoothly.

In addition to on-field development, McDonald’s invited our young mentees and mentors to come together for a shared meal and an interactive session focused on learning and personal growth. The gathering created a safe and inspiring space where the girls openly shared their experiences, reflected on their journeys, and imparted valuable knowledge to one another. We extend our sincere gratitude to McDonald’s for their continued support and for providing opportunities that allow our girls to learn, connect, and grow beyond the cricket pitch. It is through meaningful partnerships like these that we can create impactful platforms that support the holistic development of our players.



WOMEN'S MONTH LUNCH

The programme concluded with a Women’s Month Lunch on 22 August, bringing together players, mentors, stakeholders, and partners. The event served as both a celebration of the girls’ achievements and a reaffirmation of our long-term commitment to advancing gender equality and developing resilient young women in sport. This day was a culmination of what had been a successful month where the mentees and mentors met to share their stories and journey with players from different schools, hubs and clubs the mentorship programme was designed to develop well-rounded young women by combining athletic, personal, and academic support. Through hands-on coaching, structured mentorship, and needs assessments, the programme aimed at enhancing the girls cricket skills and

overall game awareness, identified areas where academic assistance and additional resources were required, provided meaningful emotional and motivational support , Strengthened confidence, resilience, and leadership potential. On the day we had amazing women panellists join us to share words of wisdom and empowerment, Miyanda Maseti BMX Olympian, Muditambi Ravele, South African Women and Sport Foundation Founder, Alyssa Conley athletics Olympian.

This initiative stands as a testament to the Lions Development Foundation’s ongoing dedication to nurturing resilient, confident, and capable young women, not only within cricket, but as future leaders in their communities.



WORLD DISABILITY MONTH INITIATIVE SUPPORT JHB SCHOOL FOR AUTISM

As part of our commitment to inclusive development, the organisation marked **World Disability Month** with a focused initiative aimed at supporting learners with special educational needs. In partnership with **Masana Petroleum Solutions**, we visited the **Johannesburg School for Autism** to strengthen the school's technological learning environment through the donation of **digital boards and computers**.

Children on the autism spectrum often benefit significantly from structured, visual, and interactive learning styles. **ICT tools** such as digital boards and computers play a vital role.

This initiative is an extension of **Lions Cricket's** ongoing relationship with the Johannesburg School for Autism. Our continued support reinforces our belief that our role extends **beyond the field**.

While sports development remains central to our work, we recognise that sustainable change also comes through **education**, one of the foundational pillars of the **Lions Development Foundation**.

By supporting both athletic and academic development, we aim to empower learners with the skills, confidence, and opportunities needed to thrive in their school environment and broader communities.

Throughout the year, our CSI initiatives continued to strengthen and uplift young people and the communities around us. With a focus on education, digital empowerment, and youth development, we delivered programmes designed to create real, measurable impact. This report highlights the reach, outcomes, and positive change achieved through our projects.



THANK YOU TO OUR AMAZING PARTNERS

It is through the commitment of our partners that Lions Development Foundation is able to touch lives, strengthen communities, and build pathways for sustainable development.





LIONS

DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

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Lions Cricket Development Foundation

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