

TSHWANE TO SHARE IN FIFA WORLD CUP™ TROPHY FEVER

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The visit of the FIFA World Cup™ Trophy to Pretoria in the next two weeks will generate enthusiasm and passion for the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ which is now just days away.

The solid-gold trophy will be on display in the Pretoria city centre, Soshanguve and Mamelodi where members of the public will be able to see it up close, have their pictures taken and participate in wide range of activities organised by Coca-Cola, the organisers of the FIFA World Cup™ Trophy Tour.

“The 2010 FIFA World Cup™ is a once-in-a-lifetime event for all South Africans,” says Onwell Msomi, General Manager 2010 FIFA World Cup™ of Coca-Cola South Africa. “Only a limited number of people will be able to watch the games live in the stadiums. The Trophy, however, will be seen by a much larger part of the population.”

The MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation in Gauteng, Ms Nelesiwe Moerane, says excited South Africans have been counting the days since the announcement was made four years ago that the country will host the FIFA World Cup™.

“The event is upon us and I want to urge fellow South Africans to be good hosts. As the Trophy is doing the rounds in Gauteng come up in numbers to see it and pray that it remains in our country if not on the continent,” says MEC Moerane.

Tshwane, the home of South Africa’s premier clubs, Supersport United and Mamelodi Sundowns, has produced some of the country’s top soccer talent including former Bafana Bafana captain, Neil Tovey, and Orlando Pirates midfielder, Thulasizwe Mbuyane.

There is no doubt that the arrival of the FIFA World Cup™ Trophy will inspire more youngsters to take the game seriously and aspire to become part of South Africa's soccer future.

The Trophy will be on display at three venues in the Tshwane municipal area:

- Mamelodi Town Hall, Saturday 29 May from 10h00 to 18h00;
- Pretoria City Hall, Monday 31 May from 10h00 to 18h00;
- Soshanguve Campus of the Tshwane University of Technology, Wednesday 2 June from 10h00 to 18h00.

In Tshwane local supporters will have an opportunity to get close to the trophy. For some lucky winners of the Coca-Cola Pashasha competition there will be a bonus chance to have their pictures taken with this iconic symbol of 2010. Those lucky few must, however, already be at the venue at 08h00, as that special moment can only be celebrated between 08h00 and 10h00 on all the days of the events in Tshwane.

The FIFA World Cup™ Trophy arrives in Tshwane on the final leg of its global tour during which it travelled across the world in 225 days, and was seen and admired by millions of people in 86 countries.

It made its first stop in South Africa at the residence of former President Nelson Mandela in recognition of the major contribution he made in bringing the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ to the country.

Now, the solid-gold Trophy is in Pretoria to be seen and admired by local communities before it is handed over to the captain of the winning team of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup™ on 11 July.

“We have kept the best for last,” says Onwell Msomi. “Together with the Trophy Coca-Cola will be providing a wide range of fun-filled activities that will appeal to young and old.

“This is an opportunity to celebrate the first World Cup tournament on African soil and prepare the mood of the people of Pretoria just days before the kick-off on 11 June.”

This is the first time ever that the Trophy has made an extended trip across the length and breadth of the host country. It is visiting 32 cities, towns and villages in a tour lasting a month. Through this tour Coca-Cola is ensuring that the largest possible number of South Africans can share in World Cup fever.

The Road to Tshwane started at FIFA headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland, on 21 September 2009 when the President of FIFA, Sepp Blatter, and Coca-Cola Chairman and CEO, Muhtar Kent, took the first steps with the Trophy on its 134 017 kilometre journey.

Its first stop was in Cairo, Egypt, before criss-crossing Africa, touching down in more than 50 capitals on the continent. It was in Cape Town, briefly, for the FIFA World Cup™ Draw in December 2009 before continuing on its global journey.

On a tight schedule and with even tighter security, the valuable trophy is travelling South Africa in a specially branded helicopter, followed on the road by a large support team who will run and stage the events.

In terms of FIFA rules, only Heads of State and the victorious captains and coaches may touch this valuable trophy which has been the symbol of sporting excellence since it made its first appearance at the 1974 World Cup finals.

“The FIFA World Cup Trophy Tour might never again come to Tshwane in our lifetime. This is an opportunity to join all South Africans and claim your own special memory of the 2010 FIFA World Cup,” says Msomi.

For more information on the South African leg of the FIFA World Cup™ Trophy Tour please visit www.cocacola.co.za/2010

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