



# They don't make them like Yogi anymore

**B**ack in 2000 when Anton Ferreira took ownership of the director of coaching role in the then United Cricket Board of South Africa, the national team were desperately trying to hang on to the coat-tails of an Australian team that was fast disappearing over the horizon.

That there has always been great talent within South African cricket is well known, but developing that talent into world-class cricketers requires expert coaching and for that, the coaches need coaching themselves.

Which is where Ferreira's job was so important and one of the first things the former Northern Transvaal, Warwickshire and South Africa all-rounder did after he retired from playing in 1992 was to go to Australia and do an Australian Cricket Board coaching qualification. He would have

been especially pleased with the Proteas' emphatic series win over Australia earlier this year.

It was a great way to sign-off as, disappointingly for the numerous people he has touched and influenced, Ferreira retired from his post, renamed manager of coaching and coaching education, this month.

But there are few people more passionate about cricket than "Yogi" and he will remain in the game on a consultancy basis. The Africa Cricket Association are the first to benefit from his wisdom and enthusiasm as he has now turned his attention to training their coaches.

Passion is a priceless commodity in sport – consider how it has driven Asian cricket to pre-eminence in the game – but so is humility and, even as he was climbing the ladder both as a player and coach, Ferreira never forgot the

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lessons of his youth and in particular the tremendous example of his father, who was heavily involved in boxing.

"I am humbled and I can never repay the game for all the wonderful enjoyment it has given me. I learnt, as a young boy, about the importance of sportsmanship and treating everyone with respect from my wonderful father and about the game from Northern Transvaal legends like Denis Lindsay, Jackie Botten and Tiger Lance. They taught me about enjoying the pleasure of risk," Ferreira said recently when he was

honoured by Titans cricket for 40 years of service to cricket in the province and in South Africa.

Ferreira was able to not only develop the cricketing talents but also plant those life skills in hundreds of South African players; although he has left the formal structures of South African cricket, there is no doubt he will continue to make an impact.

"Yogi has done it all in cricket, he has made an incredible contribution to the game, and was one of the people who laid the foundation for our current success as a franchise. What he has done for cricket in this area and around the country during his 18 years with Cricket South Africa has been phenomenal and his passion for the game is what sets him apart. And it was all done without any tendency for self-promotion, you won't find a more humble, down-to-earth man," Titans CEO

Jacques Faul said in his tribute.

From a personal perspective, this legend of the game (he was possibly more appreciated in English county cricket than here) was always approachable, usually smiling and keen to chew the fat over the great game of cricket. Given his marvellous sense of humour, it is always a pleasure to hear Yogi's tales from a cricket career that has taken him around the globe.

Another former Northern Transvaal all-rounder, Hein Raath, has been a close friend of Ferreira's dating back to when they both studied and played for the University of Pretoria.

Ferreira then took over the running of the club and, as Raath, a former chairman of Tuks cricket, pointed out, this job is now done by 17 people while Yogi did it all himself back then. Which rather sums up the man.

