



Lynette Ferreira (front, middle in pink) with several guests from the netball community of South Africa during the celebration of her 80th birthday. **Picture: Rene Odendaal.**

A Pretoria netball legend is honoured

Some of the top names in South African netball gathered in Pretoria recently to celebrate the 80th birthday of a local netball legend Lynette Ferreira.

Ferreira, who was born in 1938, has been involved in South African netball for 73 years, as player, umpire, coach, selector and administrator.

The netball legend was largely responsible for the introduction of netball at the Pretoria Teachers Training College.

At that stage, Afrikaans colleges and schools in what was then the Transvaal, preferred to play 'korfbal', but Ferreira, who was passionate about the sport, persuaded the principal of the college to allow her to start a netball club.

He agreed, with one proviso – no money would be made available.

So, Ferreira and her friends used their precious pocket money to buy netball balls and the rest of the equipment needed. They even painted the lines themselves.

Ferreira was a member of the Springbok netball team that took part in the first World Netball Cup in 1963, as well as the teams that competed in 1967, 1970 and 1973.

SA was then banned from taking part in international sport and it was not until 1994 that South Africa was once again allowed to play international netball.

When she turned to umpiring and coaching, she proved to be just as good and excelled in both.

In 1976, she was awarded the State President's Merit Award as the Coach of the Year.

During the years of isolation, Ferreira worked hard to keep the sport alive and she can be proud of the fact that netball is South Africa's biggest women's sport.

The top officials of Netball South Africa, including president Cecilia Molokwane, vice president Christine du Preez and chief executive Blanche de la Guerre, were among those who gathered to celebrate Ferreira's birthday.

Others who joined the festivities included former Proteas coach, Carin Strauss, several former Springbok and Protea players, teammate and former NSA president Rita Oosthuizen, as well as Tuks, Jaguars and South African under-21 coach, Jenny van Dyk.

The celebration was held where Ferreira stays, in the Kronendal retirement home.