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Rugby 7s and volleyball teams have a ball

THE University of Johannesburg (UJ) lifted its first Varsity 7s title as it saw off the University of the Free State (Kovsies) 32-5 at this year's Varsity 7s tournament at Kingspark Stadium at the weekend.

The Maties (Stellenbosch University) finished third while UP-Tuks emerged victorious in the Plate final. Kovsies hit the road running in the Cup final as they made huge inroads into UJ's territory and they were rewarded with an unconverted try as Armand Pretorius off the back of a strong scrum.

Strongman Marco Mason was shown a yellow card for a high tackle and the one-man advantage allowed Ronald Brown to make the break and offload to Edwin Jansen who scored for UJ. The teams could not score again in the first half and went into half-time with the score tied up at 5-5. UJ's talisman, Ronald Brown burnt up the field as he raced in for yet another try as UJ snuck ahead 10-5 with four minutes left on the clock.

A great decision by UJ to use their Power Play paid dividends as Martin van Wyk crossed the whitewash and Ricardo Duarte scored in the second Power Play to hand the University of Johannesburg the Cup with a 32-5 win over the University of the Free State.

Meanwhile, in the beach Volleyball tournament Tuks became the brand new champions of the 2017 Varsity Beach Volleyball tournament, deposing

four-time previous champions UWC, who have dominated this tournament in the recent past, thanks to a 52-20 victory over UJ.

Tuks and UJ fought through the round robin phases to eventually contest the final of this prestigious tournament. And what a thrilling game it was, living up to its top class final billing.

The spectators filled the stand and they were duly entertained by some brilliant beach volleyball. Vanessa Sardinia da Silva and Jamie-Lee Curtis were good value for their early lead at 9-3 before the first time-out.

Both players got most of their first serves in but their strength was perhaps their communication and how well both returned the ball to their opponents' court.

As half time approached, you could sense that Tuks were grabbing this game by the scruff of its neck and refusing to let go, leading 24-10 at the break. UJ brought on Marua Ikoli for Ngwabi and this really did not deter Tuks who just got the basics right, keeping calm and getting the ball over the net, putting pressure on UJ, whose players really did not have an answer to Tuks' precise play. They taught UJ a lesson.

Vanessa Sardinia da Silva was player of the match. Laseqah Sujee was deserved player of the tournament. Striker of the tournament was Caroline Malalele.



UCT players tackle a UFS Kovsies team member at the Varsity 7s tournament which played at Kings Park.
PHOTO: Rudy Nkgadima