



# KZN volleyball teams dominate Tubby Reddy Classic

The inaugural R100,000 Tubby Reddy Classic staged for senior men and women's volleyball teams at the University of KwaZulu Natal's Westville Campus Sports Centre from September 20-22, ended on a high note for the home province's top contenders, Maidstone, Liberte and UKZN who finished in the top three of the country's richest volleyball tournament.

In the women's category, DUT had themselves to blame for letting the final slip through their fingers against TUKS from Pretoria after having won the opening set by a convincing 25-19 margin. Losing the second set 25-18, set the stage for a TUKS victory albeit through a nail-biting finish in the third and fourth sets when TUKS scraped home by 28-26 score line.

Maidstone VC from Tongaat who play in the Verulam Volleyball League blasted their way through the 2018 league and all the competitions on offer there. This fine form, according to coach Ricky Perumal, put his team in pole position to reach the podium as medallists in the inaugural national inter club championship at UKZN.

Maidstone squared up against local rivals, UKZN after having over powered Liberte (3-1) and VW from the Eastern Cape (3-0) in the group stages of the tournament.

After having romped home with a blistering 25-14 win against UKZN in the first set, one would have expected Maidstone to secure a comfortable 3-0 win. However, UKZN's fight back largely through prolific attacker Devin O' Regan restored some pride in the students' camp when they edged out Maidstone by a 25-20 margin in the second set.

Those who witnessed the third and fourth sets of the Maidstone and UKZN semi-final match could

have easily mistaken the contest to be a hard fought final. The excited fans applauded loudly every time the teams engaged in an all powerful attack and blocking combination. Eventually it was Maidstone's veteran play maker, Ryaan 'Spitz' Lahldas

a former SA National team setter whose sublime setting brought the best out of his 'big attackers' Hansen Viragavan and Sandile Khoza to win by a 28-26 score line to meet Liberte in the final. Liberte beat Kamplits from Limpopo in straight sets (25-23; 25-17; 25-22).

The tightly contested first set could have gone Liberte's way when the score reached 22-18 in their favour. Sadly for the Liberte fans, four consecutive spiking errors brought Maidstone back into contention. Maidstone won the encounter by a nail biting 29-27 score.

The stage was now set for a titanic battle with the fans joining in with words of encouragement. While Liberte won the second set by a close margin, 25-23, Sandile Khoza (Best Attacker) and Hansen Viragavan (MVP) combined well to put Maidstone back in the lead by posting a 25-21 score.

Throwing caution to the wind, Liberte's power hitters, Loueshan Gungarajh, Mikesh Rampursad and Yuvir Ramjit who were merciless in their attack, thrashed Maidstone 25-14, to force the encounter into the deciding fifth set. Once again, Viragavan and Khoza put the final beyond the reach of Liberte when they posted a 15-10 win to pick up the R20,000 winners cheque.

Both teams will be South Africa's representatives at the African Zone 6 club championship scheduled to take place at UKZN in the first week of December this year.

