



Photo: Eugene Segeers The Colours of Sport  
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South Africa carries the title of a rainbow nation, and it is known as one of many countries with diverse cultures and beliefs. Participation in sports is one of the tools used to bring people of different backgrounds, ages, races and cultures together as South Africans and as Kopsie students.

In South Africa, many sports have “quota-systems.” This is implemented in some of the University of the Free State Varsity Sports teams. Quota systems require a minimum number of players with different races, to ensure diversity in teams and to make sure that there is an equal representation. There are mixed feelings about quota systems. Some feel that it deprives some players of their rightfully earned places, while others feel that it is a necessary precaution.

Not all sports at the University of the Free State have “sport quota systems”. A sport such as tennis does not subscribe to the structure, as it is an individual sport. Tennis is also a technical sport and if a player does not play competitively from a young age, it is hard to compete later at that level. However, some of the varsity sports teams fall under their national sports committees, which may have “quota systems” in the form of “transformation policies.” Both the Varsity Cricket and Netball teams have transformation policies.

“As a coach, it is important to choose players because of their talent, whilst making sure there is a variety within the team. If you cannot do that, you are not fair as a coach to your country because there are incredibly talented players of all colour,” says Varsity Netball coach, Burtha de Kock. De Kock feels that sport is a tool, binding people together, regardless of their differences. “Sports on any level teaches people to understand and respect each other,” says De Kock.

The Kovies’ Varsity Cricket coach, Johnathan Beukes, feels that transformation policies are the right way forward. Varsity Cricket chooses two players of different races, out of 11 players. The Varsity Cricket chooses two players of different players from a squad of 11 members. When going on tour, it has to be three players out of 12. He explains that it is usually not an issue to find diversity within a team. “Participating in sports together forms a bond between people,” says Beukes. Janine de Kock, the Chief Officer of Kovie Sport, feels that sport is the best way to bring different people together if it is handled in the correct manner.

Jonathan Beukes, Kovies’ varsity cricket coach, feels that transformation policies are the right way forward. Our varsity cricket team has to play two players of different races, out of 11 players. When going on tour, it has to be 3 players out of 12. He explains that it is usually not an issue to find diversity within a team. “Participating in sports together, up and running at 5am, that forms a bond between people that you will not get just walking past others on campus.”

Janine de Kock, the chief officer of Kovie sport, feels that sport is one of the best ways to bring different people together – if it is handled on the correct manner.

Being a Kovie student, we can feel proud to be part of our country’s rainbow nation.