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South Africa's Unrecognized Legends,  
Honoring Their Sporting Legacies

Esau, Omar. *Scrumming against all Odds: Voices of SARU Rugby Legends*. Cape Town: Burnet Media, pp. 1-263, 2025.  
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Esau's Editorial Efforts in Lansdowne: Introductory Comments

Throughout the apartheid period, writing about the different sporting codes—ranging from track & field athletics to tennis & hockey to cricket & rugby in South Africa—was not only dominated and influenced by the privileged White racist society's writers, but they closely controlled the sporting narratives, offering a decidedly one-sided perspective. Via this perverse outlook, they forwarded the notion that those who were Black (defined broadly as those 'not White' or 'people of color') had no interest in any of these codes; and, on top of that, their warped narratives conveyed the belief that Black people did not possess the ability to shine in any of the mentioned sporting codes. These biased writers were, however, proven wrong on several occasions since many individuals from within the Black communities have been ignored despite having shown that they possessed the necessary skills and talents to play and compete in the sporting arena; one can provide a list of many individuals (among them, the cricketer Basil D'Oliviera) who excelled in their respective sporting careers. But since the apartheid government's bigoted racial laws were enacted and executed, the legislation calculatedly kept Black people out of these sporting arenas.

The racist regime's policies were deliberately designed to exclude those who were Black from the sporting circles; this is quite evident when one flips through the publicized narratives in newspaper reports that appeared daily/weekly in the White-owned press. These newspaper columns, for example, did not cover the activities of Black people who participated in different sporting codes extensively or in a balanced manner; and as a result of these discriminatory practices, they had little or rather no knowledge of the extent to which these Black players and their club members reflected religio-cultural communal sporting connections. By and large, it may be argued from this reviewer's perspective—who grew up during that period (circa 1960s until the 1980s)—that these whitewashed narratives, spewed out by the white-owned and controlled press, relayed negative views about Black individuals. One of the illogical objectives was to solely showcase to the western world that white sportspeople possessed

the appropriate abilities to play any sport. By implication, it meant that Black individuals—or referred to as ‘people of color’—were incapable of participating in any of these sports as potential professionals; nay, they perpetually presented prejudiced views about them! One only needs to return to newspapers such as *The Cape Herald*, *Golden City Post*, or *Sunday Times Extra* that were printed during the cited years in the Greater Cape Town area and beyond.

Factoring in these observations, this reviewer warmly welcomes Omar Esau—who is an affiliate of the University of Stellenbosch’s Faculty of Education—his fresh publication; a text that captured and narrated a series of enlightening stories. Esau’s edited volume tells the reader about fifteen rugby players who hailed from different communities across (and even outside) the Cape Peninsula during the apartheid era. Esau’s work adds to the catalog of non-fiction literature that communicates untold stories of rugby players who played for the South African Rugby Union (SARU est.

1966)—also referred to or rather closely linked to the South African Council on Sport (SACOS)—during the time when the racist regime rejected recognizing the union. But perhaps it is best to leave that aside and turn to Esau’s edited volume; a recent publication that fills an important gap in South Africa’s sporting history and complements a few that appeared over the years (see Odendaal’s comments in the Preface [p.18]). Tying this text in with the previous remarks, the questions are: which gap did Esau’s edited book fill, and what did he include in this publication that is excluded from the other published texts? One simple response is that from the Black rugby fraternity, Esau identified individuals who were outstanding as players, coaches, and referees in the rugby arena and included them in this edited book. They were individuals who could match any Springbok rugby player or referee during that period. Another point is that none of the life stories of these individuals were included in texts that were published up until now; there might have been short essays about them that appeared in popular magazines and academic journals. One such example is Aslam Fataar’s essay titled ‘The Story of Aslam Toefy: An ‘Incidental’ Rugby Player One such example is Aslam Fataar’s essay titled “*The Story of Aslam Toefy: An ‘Incidental’ Rugby Player* ([Muslim Views](#)).

These legendary rugby players, whose collective contributions were not only enormous, but they were literally and figuratively ignored and, of course, left out of notable sports publications; in other words, they remained invisible to the public eye, and, on top of that, they were distastefully dishonored. This was a critical issue for Esau as an educator and radio sports journalist; he and his cohort of contributors gathered to address the issue, and they succeeded in their quest to honor them and return the dignity that they were denied. For Esau, each of the selected individuals had made their mark in this sporting code; but since they were Black, they were not given any form of recognition by the White-dominated rugby circles.

Keeping these responses in mind, Esau, as an ‘action researcher’ and

community-oriented academic, identified and selected, along with his co-authors, fifteen individuals. At the beginning stages of Esau's fieldwork, he networked to rope in potential authors; more than fifteen chapters were earmarked as chapters, but, unfortunately, some of them could not manage to deliver, and one researcher (mentioned earlier), who had completed his chapter, pulled out of the project. Though this disappointed the editor since that essay was indeed an important complementary chapter on the sub-theme, he trudged on with the collection of essays that he secured, collected, and compiled. Be that as it may, it should be stressed that all the researchers, educationists, and intellectuals whom Esau brought on board were informed about the 'engaged scholarship' approach, and each of them was familiar with applicable theoretical methods. As a result, this crop of theoretically armed and academically prepared scholars thus matched the criteria Esau had set; and together they collectively produced this collection of informed chapters.

But before scanning the chapters and contents, permit the reviewer to quickly comment on three items, ones that form part of this edited text: the first is the Index (pp. 258-263) that only lists proper names that occur throughout the publication; the second is the References (pp. 244-256) that the editor inserted at the end instead of below each chapter; the third is the catalogue of acronyms (pp. 242-243) that have been referred to in the different parts of the book; and the fourth is the collection of pictures that were included, some in various parts of the book and in many cases accompanying the chapter's content; and in one instance inserted within one chapter, namely Chapter 7; and these were squeezed, unnumbered, between p. 128 and p. 129. Referring to this chapter and its enfolded contents, the opportunity opens itself to turn the chapters and their contents.

#### Chapters and Contents

Since the overall approach and the adopted method constructed a common thread that ties Esau – as the editor – and his cohort of authors, it laid the foundation for one to reflect and engage with the chapters. But before one dips into the chapters, mention should be made of the fact that the edited work opens with a tripartite Preface (pp. 12-19); one that contains three interrelated messages from Gavin Varejes (who funded the book's publication), Gayton McKenzie (who is the current South African Minister of Sports, Arts, and Culture), and Prof. Andre Odendaal (who is a University of the Western Cape scholar-in-residence); each of them shared their warm messages of support for this publication; in the case of the last-mentioned, he lists a few related publications that zoomed in on rugby. After the Preface, the book includes Prof. MLA Le Cordeur's (University of Stellenbosch scholar) Foreword (pp. 20-23); the latter's supportive piece paved the way for Esau's 'introduction' that broadly addresses 'An Engaged Scholarship: Unearthing the untold histories of SARU rugby heroes' and offers a brief one-line synopsis of each chapter. Though Esau speaks about 'engaged scholarship' that was coined by Ernest Boyle's *Scholarship of Engagement* (1990) many decades ago, he did not satisfactorily unpack this approach nor make reference to Boyle. One may describe this method as an essentially democratic

education approach; one that is in sync with a community-based research style that is sometimes viewed as ‘community development.’

Esau thus underscores the approach’s importance in research projects such as this; one that brings, through a storytelling method that includes an array of rich and colorful stories of fifteen individuals via interviews and oral sources. Some of them were rugby players, while others were coaches and referees. In this edited volume, Esau managed to lead a pack of dedicated and passionate researchers, and he managed to chronologically catalogue each by narrating the lives of the fifteen sports legends.

#### From District Six to Claremont - Chapters: 1-4

The book’s first two chapters, both authored by the editor, inform the reader about ‘the two terrible twins,’ namely Salie Fredericks and Yusuf Davids (see their picture opposite p. 128). Both were dedicated lock forwards for the Western Province Rugby Football Union (WPRFU) and the South African Rugby Union (SARU), respectively. One would like the author to have described how they played together in the line-out or in the pack as they were trying to retain the ball in a rugby match. It can be recalled that when they were in the line-out or in the scrum, they distinctly read one another’s moves against their opponents; a team whose forwards had difficulty in countering the terrible twins. Esau titles the opening chapter (pp. 31-42) ‘Salie ‘Lippe’ Fredericks:... Retelling his story through the lens of the subaltern,’ and the second (pp. 45-56) ‘Yusuf ‘Tatts’ Davids: In touch with a legend;’ both are legends and have left a legacy in the field that no sports writer or journalist can ignore. When Esau concludes the Fredericks chapter, he tells the reader: ‘He (Fredericks)... carried the aspirations of the people of District Six and the marginalized onto the field, resisted stoically... to honour the principles of humanity...’ (p.42). And as he rounds off the story of Davids, he underlines the point that ‘... David’s narrative offers visible insights into the interplay between sport, identity, and activism within the context of apartheid.’ Now this is an apt description not only of David’s but of all the players, coaches, and referees that appear in this volume and are captured in other essays. Indeed, the interconnection between the communities’ identity, their relationship with the clubs within the apartheid context, and the activism against all forms of discrimination in the racist system was palpable.

Now the next two chapters shed light on the lives of ‘Moegsien ‘Max Baise’ Davids...: Elegant player, Flamboyant referee’ (pp.59-72) and ‘Yusuf ‘Jowa’ Abrahams...: Tracing and Sketching the life of a rugby legend’ (pp.75-84); the latter chapter was penned by Mohammad Faiz Gierdien and the former by Mogamat Noor Davids, who are academics; one still active and the other retired. In the chapter on Davids, MN Davids assesses his elder brother’s performance as a referee, and in the other, Gierdien offers his reading of Abrahams’ career as a rugby player.

On an aside, Davids (pp.70-71) informs the reader how nicknames were

used in the Cape (Muslim) communities; it was observed in the case of several rugby players that the nicknames were not used arbitrarily. In Greater Cape Town's southern suburb area, namely Claremont, almost every family had a nickname; and in one instance, Imam Abdullah Haron, who was killed in detention during 1969 for his anti-apartheid stance, had inspired Yusuf Abrahams (see Gierdien pp.80-81) and was fondly referred to as 'Tommy Gentles'; the latter was a well-known apartheid Springbok scrumhalf in the late 1950s. In Esau's one chapter (p.34), he also describes how Fredericks was given the nickname 'Lippe' (Lips).

Back to Davids, he – like Esau but unlike Gierdien – made reference to a few sports publications to frame his particular chapter; he correctly argues that Black sports persons (or 'people of colour') were deliberately airbrushed out of Shelly Carmichael's 2003 edited text titled *112 Years of Springbok Rugby 1891-2003!* (p. 61). In this regard, many non-White clubs, which were established in the late 19th century, managed to survive to this day; one such club was Roslyn's (est. 1882) that Salie Fredericks captained, and another was Primroses Rugby Club (est. 1896) that Yusuf Abrahams captained in the late 1960s into the early 1970s. Both players also went on to become administrators for their respective clubs; the same story is told about the other players who feature in this edited work. Davids, however, comments that Booley's 1998 *Forgotten Heroes: History of Black Rugby (1882-1992)* may be regarded as the most comprehensive coverage on the history of Black rugby in South Africa; this is a theme that most of the other works on the subjects fail to address.

#### From District Six to Mowbray - Chapters: 5-8

Davids' dense story about his elder brother – born and raised in District Six – not only highlights his brother's talents as a rugby player but also as a coach, and then too as a cricketer as well as a Malay choir singer cum coach. What Davids captures in the chapter's conclusion applies to so many others who played these sporting codes in the Cape Peninsula and in other parts of the country. But let us leave Davids at this point and move to the next two chapters; the one by Nazli Domingo-Salie takes the reader on a journey into the life story of 'Manie Abrahams...: Navigating the shadows of apartheid sport in the 1950s and 1960s' (pp. 87-109), and the other by Soraya Jabaar-Esau with Achmat Esau seriously recaptures the 'Cassiem Jabaar...: The Story (of a folk hero)' (pp. 111-118); here the 'folk hero' phrase was extracted from the Esau & Esau chapter. Both of them, like those in the previous chapters and the coming ones, were outstanding sports personalities. Soraya Jabaar-Esau had, in fact, written a very colorful and interesting booklet about Cassiem Jabaar; it was titled *Kat (that is, Cat): The Cassiem Jabaar Rugby Story*, and herein she described and narrated Jabaar as a notable cat-like rugby figure—a rugby player who played alongside classy players such as Salie Fredericks and Yusuf Davids. Nazli Domingo Salie unpacks the story in some detail of Manie (Abdurahman), who played in a club affiliated with the City and Suburban Rugby Football Union (CSR FU), where Primroses

also had its home. Like Primroses, Abrahams' Walmers Rugby Club was also affiliated with CSRFU.

An interesting point that Domingo-Salie brought up as she unpacked Abrahams' story was the fact that Abrahams' club boasted six pairs of brothers, namely the Abrahams siblings alongside those of the Buffkins brothers as well as the Harris and Soeker brothers. Similar to what was witnessed in this club, one came across similar features in Primroses, which was the home of the Rushdi and Sait Majid siblings, Moegsien and Sedick Galant brothers, and Ighsaan and Allie Sadan familial buddies, to name but a few; though they were prominent players, they did not play for SARU. Setting aside these family ties and underscoring the fact that many of these were family-oriented rugby clubs, one can imagine 'Manie's rugby style' (part of a subsection) in her chapter. Using Manie's son (Shaheem) as an interlocutor, Shaheem verbally captures how he managed to perform as a kicker in American football—a style that reminded him of his father. Of interest at this point is to mention the 50:22 kick strategy (pp. 103-104) that was adopted in World Rugby circles decades later; it was Abrahams who had mastered this style, but it was never adopted. According to the chapter's author, it was only recently (that is, in 2021) adopted as practice!

Turning back to Primroses, where Yusuf Abrahams - along with the Majid brothers - was a notable force, it is important to insert a brief footnote not told in the two chapters: Primroses, like Walmers, joined CSRFU but for different reasons. This club was led by an inspirational Imam who was mentioned earlier; the latter encouraged the club to join the union to (a) break the notion that predominantly Muslim clubs do not play in unions that were mainly Christian; as a result of the Imam's influence, the club joined it, and since then, the club has never regretted the idea and has not looked back; and (b) accept an interfaith initiative that would, via the rugby fraternity, bring about a camaraderie within the Black (more specifically Coloured) sector that has not been witnessed elsewhere (hopefully, this will be revealed in Mogamat Allie's – a Cape Town sports writer and BBC commentator - unpublished manuscript on CSRFU). While everyone awaits Allie's manuscript to be published and circulated, Mogamat Goosain Abrahams tells the reader about 'Ismail 'Miley' Schroeder...: The mercurial SARU-SACOS back' (pp.121-132), and Clement du Plessis, who authored *Other Side of the Track*, narrates the stories of 'Graham Petersen & Oswald Jabobs...: (as two) SARU referees (who were) at the heart of the (anti-apartheid) struggle' (pp.135-146). The sub-title, which Abrahams constructed, contains an interesting word, and it reveals to what degree Schroeder operated as a 'mercurial' player on the field for SARU and also at club level. Here one takes a brief pause and turns the attention to Du Plessis' essay before getting back to Abrahams.

Du Plessis rightly points out that SACOS' non-racial sport policy was not welcomed by apartheid's privileged White sports-fanatic communities; representatives among them had negative views about the 'African' and

‘Coloured’ communities. These communities were described as fragmented on all levels, and when it came to sporting codes, they displayed that they were not only disorganized but that they were inapt when it came to refereeing the known sport codes (see pp.135-136). These unhealthy racist attitudes were, of course, circulated verbally and in writing in the White-owned media, as pointed out in this review essay’s introduction. They essentially wanted to bring down these Black communities and their sports clubs; ones that were established with meager funds and that succeeded in flourishing during later years as they traversed the non-racial environment.

In any event, what Du Plessis did was to offer a bird’s eye view within which non-racial oriented referees had to function. Both Petersen and Jacobs were principled referees on and off the field; though the essay did not provide a detailed insight into the two referees’ lives, one could get a good glimpse of the discriminatory arena in which they had to ply their trade as trained referees. In fact, they were trained using Welsh training manuals that helped them in their understanding of the philosophy and practice of refereeing. Different from Du Plessis’ focus, Abrahams, who is a radio sports journalist with a Cape-based community radio station, namely Radio 786, turns his attention using a socio-cultural lens to examine the life of Schroeder. The latter was not only a skilful rugby player for Caledonian Roses (known fondly as Callies) but also an athlete for the South African Senior Schools Sports Association (SASSSA) and a cricketer for Roslyns Cricket Club (RCC). Being multi-talented and skilled in the sporting sector, Schroeder was a sought-after sports person. Abrahams echoes the words of a fellow contributor in this edited text when he says that Schroeder’s journey, as a sports person (p.131), ‘...reveals the powerful intersection of community identity, resistance and historical forces...’; as a result, the notion of intersectionality pushed these elements to the fore, and they – collectively – shaped the lives of an array of Black sports persons in a very racist society. From Strand to Lansdowne – Chapters: 9-12

Moving on, the reader encounters the chapter that shifts the attention to a former principal, ‘Riyaadh (Arab) Najaar: Resilience and Legacy in Apartheid South Africa’ (pp.149-163) by a former principal too, Faseeg Manie; and another by sports journalist and lecturer, Shamila Sulayman, who offers the reader a peek into the life of ‘Faiek ‘Blatjang’ Hendricks: A Full Semi-Circle’ (pp.165-177). Manie informs one that due to limited data sources about Black players in general, he relied heavily on interviews with the Strand-born Najaar and oral history to piece his subject’s story together; for him, it was ‘an attempt to capture the suppressed and undocumented history of a rugby legend’ (p.150).

As Manie unpacks Najaar’s rich life story as a rugby player, he demonstrates how Najaar struck a neat balance between doing part-time studies and passionately following his blossoming sporting career in rugby. Najaar, who was trained as an educationist with a special interest in history, climbed the

academic ladder like this chapter's author; he eventually landed as a principal at Spine Road Senior Secondary in Mitchells Plain, where he further demonstrated his educational leadership skills. During Najaar's retirement years, he channeled his energies into other activities such as breeding pigeons. Slightly different from Manie's essay, which focuses on Najaar, who played for Primroses and Violets respectively, Shamila Sulayman helps us understand how Hendrick's life turned into 'a full semi-circle' as a Silvertree Rugby Football Club player. Sulayman documents how Hendricks stepped up the rugby ladder from the club to the union before being selected as a SARU player. Similar to Najaar, Hendricks also coached for a while. As one compares these two chapters, it is noted that the authors did not embed their respective chapters in a particular theoretical frame; but as one closely assesses them, it may be argued that they did adopt an engaged scholarship approach charted out by the editor and that they were reliant on interviews and oral sources to assist and enrich the lives of their research subjects.

As one turns to the eleventh chapter (pp. 179-187), the shift is stark; here the author provides insights into his own life. The chapter is essentially an autobiographical piece, an approach that is welcome in this volume. The mere fact that 'Tauriq Britton...: (tells the reader about) Threads of self in the weave of memory' is indeed a powerful 'narrative inquiry' (p. 179) response in the circumstances where everyone else's stories were narrated, and here he opts to record his own. In a similar manner to what other contributors stated, Britton poses a critical question in his introductory remarks: 'How did I, Tauriq Britton, reflect the interplay between personal identity, resilience, and the socio-political context of rugby in South Africa? It is a very significant question that all the authors should have posed when they interviewed their respective subjects; perhaps some did, considering the fact that they underscored the intersectionality of these elements, as noted in more than one chapter (such as Abrahams regarding Schroeder). Britton, who played for Young Stars Rigby Club, pursued the autobiographical approach to understand himself and make sense of his personal experiences in the environment in which he lives (p. 181). He records his journey from one area in the Cape Peninsula to another and how he trained to achieve milestones and triumphs. In having shifted beyond being a rugby player, he continues to ponder the past and present; he spends his time offering motivational speeches to club members at functions.

The twelfth chapter (pp. 189-197) by Ebrahim Galant, who is an independent journalist and former rugby player, documents the story of 'Faiek Davids...: (who is) A Humble double Springbok'. Galant, who does not offer a conceptual frame and relies on the theoretical setting provided by the editor, economically describes Davids' career as a Primrose rugby and cricket player. The author acknowledges, like Gierdien when he wrote about Yusuf Abrahams, that he left out a huge chunk of this sports person's life; despite that, Galant managed to capture the gist of an exciting professional career.



## From Lansdowne to Mitchells Plain – Chapters 13-15

At this point, the review assesses the penultimate two chapters; the first looks at the life of ‘Nadir Isaacs...: (who displayed) Full-Circle Resilience’ (pp. 199-212) and this was the work of Mishka Esau (the editor’s daughter); and the second dips into the life of ‘Dale Santon...(who demonstrated) Tenacity and Triumph (on and off the field)’ (pp. 215-233) and it was penned by Faseeg Manie, who published another chapter in this volume. Mishka, following in her father’s footsteps, offers a background and rationale for this research project. And like Manie and a few others, she constructs an insight into the nature of apartheid and shows how it affected the sporting arena and its myriad of players who hailed from the Black communities; here, she publishes her thoughts on Isaacs, who was among a few that were mentored by Fredericks. Isaacs, it may be argued, and drawing from Mishka Esau’s essay, belonged to the handful who eventually made it to become a SARU player after having acquired his skills at Primroses and Violets respectively; and this may be attributed to Isaacs’ full-circle resilience (note the chapter’s subtitle).

Shifting to Manie’s chapter, he clarifies his research approach that is based on interviews, online sources, and published texts that include articles and books. Manie sketches Santon’s – Manie prefers to use the first name instead of the surname - life in Moersdorp and Mitchells Plain respectively. Before informing the reader about Santon’s formative years in the rugby circles, where he joined Kalk Bay Marines and later, like Isaacs, left the club for Violets, Manie mentions a few factual matters that remain part of Santon’s personal history.

### Wrapping Up in Zeekoevlei: Waghid’s Reading of the Edited Text

Esau’s edited volume was brought to a fitting close by his mentor and colleague – an esteemed emeritus professor in education - at the University of Stellenbosch, Professor Yusef Waghid, who belongs to a handful of scholars who possess three doctoral degrees. Waghid’s final chapter, titled ‘Scrumming for Justice: Rugby, resistance, and the (robust) struggle for inclusiveness’ (pp. 234-241), wraps up this volume with his own evaluation. As a theorist and a philosopher of education, Waghid pursues an autobiographical tactic; a style that is similar to Britton. Apart from mentioning his ties with District Six, from where quite a few of the stalwarts came and who were captured in this edited work, Waghid educates the reader about the relationship between democracy and rugby. Waghid stresses in his self-reflexive closing chapter that the volume that Esau edited is not just about a sporting code, namely rugby. He argues cogently that it “is about history, resilience, exclusion, and collective struggles.” This is unquestionably the case, and each narrated story reveals vividly and tangibly that. When this reviewer’s generation witnessed the impact of apartheid in all spheres of life, including the sporting sector, it sharpened their lives to such an extent that they did not wish to identify with the Springboks rugby team. Nay, they, like Waghid, rejected the idea of identifying with this apartheid-selected national team, and they preferred to be identified with New Zealand’s All Blacks, a team

that was by and large a mixed team that had formidable Māori players setting good examples of being recognizable “players of excellence”! Waghid describes (pp. 236-237) the reason for his strong support for the All Blacks.

As Waghid moves toward the final part of his remarks, he emphasizes to what extent the Silvertree Stadium was for the community “more than just a game” (p.238). He captures the spirit, stating that “it was a shared experience that bridged generations, faiths, and racial divides.” This particular point connects with what I—as the reviewer—made when I commented about the two rugby teams, namely Walmers and Primroses. When they joined the CSRFU, the shift was not viewed on a broad canvas; it was narrowly understood and, for that, they were critiqued. But now with hindsight, our communities, who were part of that era, realize that the move at that time was indeed a wise one; it was, in fact, a bridging moment, and that meant bringing faith—Christian and Muslim—communities together. Worded differently, it was basically narrowing the divide; one that had existed because of apartheid’s despicable, inhumane policies. Apartheid’s shadow, until this very day, still haunts our communities, and it invisibly hangs over our heads, and, more so, in the sporting arena where the feeling of discrimination is still encountered.

Participating in sporting codes such as rugby is a form of education. In this regard, allow one to tweak Waghid's words when he underlined that ‘it is in this space of dialogue that meaningful learning unfolds as individuals bring their unique insights, perspectives, and lived experiences into the educational process.’ For this reviewer, it is in this democratic space of public participation and social interaction that meaningful relationships unfold as teams—on the rugby fields—bringing exceptional understandings and skills of teamwork through cooperation and collaboration come to the fore. To wrap up, Esau’s edited published text is significant for a few reasons. The first is that it acknowledges the contributions that these legends made to their collective communal identities. The second is that each of these legends drove home the lesson that they adopted a principled stand against apartheid. The third is that the generation of legends had to endure various challenges, but they remained resilient to overcome the obstacles that were thrown in their path. The fourth is that they literally changed the narrative, proving that they were far better than the White players that the apartheid system propped up. And the fifth is that each of their stories is undoubtedly inspirational and moving, reflecting a spirit of ubuntu.

If sports education is reintroduced into our educational system, then this book should be among the prescribed texts. It is one from which future generations of learners will learn about rugby as a crucial sporting code that brought communities together; and it is a publication that contains stimulating stories that teach the reader and learners about the true sense of resilience, the actual meaning of dignity, and the finer notions of human rights.

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