

Crusader crushers



By [Corné Krige](#)

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You know, when I hear the word apartheid I cringe because I am a young white male living in South Africa. Even though I am a born-and-bred Zambian, I cringe because I am embarrassed at what our old white government did to the black and coloured people in this beautiful country.



It is now 17 years since Nelson Mandela was released and we had our first free-and-fair election in 1994. I have always been under the impression that we are moving forward in this country and that we are slowly becoming a nation that is starting to accept each other for what we are and what we stand for, and not the colour of our skin.

Thousands of coloured Crusaders supporters

You might ask what this has to do with sport and in particular rugby. Well, I took my wife, Justine, to Newlands on Saturday, who hasn't been there since I played my last match five years ago. Newlands was, as usual, packed to the brim and it was an awesome sight to see. What really irritated me though was the number of coloured people who supported the Crusaders. There were literally thousands of supporters wearing Crusaders and All Black jerseys and they were very vocal when the Crusaders did anything good on the field. Now I guess it is anybody's choice who he wants to support, but this is a different situation.

There is no doubt in my mind that these people started supporting the All Blacks when they were excluded from participating in rugby back in the apartheid days. I would probably have done the same if I was in that situation, but that is now nearly 20 years ago. Surely these people are now able to see that rugby is open for people of all races to play? Yes we have a long way to go the right the wrongs of the past, but supporting the opposition is not helping the cause. I really am disappointed that the Stormers lost, but it hurt even more because there were so many people who were happy about it. Good, got it off my chest, now for the rugby.

Crushed, not Stormed

This game really was the battle of the giants and it lived up to its expectations. The Crusaders and The Stormers should both be in the play-offs and this game was an indication of things to come. The game was played at a phenomenal pace and the contact situations made me very happy that I am not playing any more. The Stormers had a couple of opportunities to win the game in the last 10 minutes, but, to be honest, I think the Crusaders deserved to win. They were more clinical in the scrums and line-out's, and their defence was absolutely outstanding. They are well-organised outfit and this showed when they picked up a few injuries in the back line and it didn't seem to affect their game at all.

In big games like this it often takes some individual brilliance to win the game, and this time Sonny Bill Williams provided the magic. He really is a freak of a player. He is six foot six inches and weighs 108kg. His ability to off-load in the tackle makes him a very dangerous player and it was his off-load that led to the Crusaders' first try.

Injury concerns

I know P Divvy thinks he can't play under pressure, but I think he must rather not give Sonny Bill any further motivation. He played against the two best centres in the country and at times he made them look silly. The bonus point might help us a lot later in the tournament, so I think the Stormers supporters need to be happy.

One big concern is the injury list. I think Nick Coster has broken a rib, Jean de Villiers looks very sore and CJ van der Linde has a groin problem. The good news is that Peter Grant and Bryan Habana are both going on tour. If the Stormers can win two out of their four games on tour and pick up a couple of bonus points, then they should secure first spot in the South African conference and a home game in the play-offs. The Sharks and the Cheetahs look like they are starting to play better rugby so let's hope they can do the Stormers some favours in the coming weeks. Have a fantastic week and I look forward to hearing some of your comments.

ABOUT CORNÉ KRIGE

Corné Krige; former captain of the Springboks has had a successful rugby career, playing 39 tests for South African in total of 18 of which were as Captain as well as leading the Springboks in the World Cup in 2003. Corné now lives in Melkbosstrand with his wife Justine and three children. He owns his own company, OK Outdoor which specializes in Outdoor Advertising and is sports contributor to Bizcommunity's BizLifestyle section.

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