

Pitch Fever nominated for SAFTA award

A documentary film about the participation of six The Big Issue vendors in the first-ever Homeless World Cup in Austria has been nominated for a Golden Horn Award, the inaugural awards of the South African Film and Television Association. Pitch Fever is an inspiring, funny and heart-warming South African story about the unemployed men's experiences of hope, hard work and sporting success - and of finding the hero within.

The vendors flew to Graz in Austria for the annual international street soccer tournament in 2003, an opportunity of a lifetime for the players. None had ever been overseas, flown on a plane or experienced the camaraderie of a team on tour. The film charts their journey from five days before they leave for Graz.

Sharon Farr, co-director and producer of the documentary at Shoot the Breeze productions, says, "This was a chance for these vendors to shine, to represent their country and to explore the similarities and differences of their backgrounds, sales pitches and life experiences with homeless and unemployed people from 17 countries. Their journey created an incredible story and we were privileged to make this film."

"We are thrilled with the Golden Horn nomination, especially as this comes at a fitting time, hot on the heels of the fourth Homeless World Cup, hosted on the Grand Parade in Cape Town by The Big Issue."

"Shoot the Breeze is also working on the follow up to Pitch Fever, which chronicles the current South African team's lives as host nation to 47 countries. The film is likely to be aired later this year."

Richard Ishmail, MD of The Big Issue South Africa, says, "I congratulate Shoot the Breeze on their nomination. They have worked closely with us for many years and help to communicate the complexities of life for our vendors."

Pitch Fever was first screened on SABC 2's Our Nation in Colour on 11 March 2004 and then again towards the end of 2005. It has also been screened at the Zanzibar International Film Festival, South Africa's Apollo Film Festival in 2004 and at the Homeless World Cup Film Festival in Edinburgh 2005.

The winners of the Golden Horn awards will be announced later this month.