



ROTARY CLUB OF WYNBERG

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ROTARY MAGAZINE MONTH



Songezo's goal: From townships to the Tour de France

- submitted by Candice Klotz-Gleave

As driving snow enveloped him and the temperature sank towards zero, Songezo Jim must have wondered if all that hard graft to realize his dream was worth it. But not even the extreme weather conditions that blighted the Milan-San Remo cycle race could tarnish the pride the 22-year-old felt at becoming a pioneer for his sport in South Africa. Eight years previously, a wall of colour and noise had transfixed him as Cape Town's biggest bike race snaked through the Khayelitsha township where he lived.

It was the first time he'd seen or heard of competitive cycling, and it started a journey that would end with him becoming the first black South African to participate at the sport's elite division, on the International Cycling Union's World Tour. And all the wind, rain, snow and ice thrown at him during Italy's famous 298-kilometre race couldn't wash away the elation Jim felt at etching his name in the history books forever.

"I've never been that cold in my whole life," Jim told CNN's [Human to Hero series](#). "It was snowing, it was wet and the rain kept coming down. "I was riding with my eyes closed at some points because there was no visibility with sunglasses, but when you took them off the snow went into your eyes. "While the racing and weather was so hard I was thinking, 'Why am I doing this, this is horrible.' But then I thought, 'This is what I've dreamed about. I would not want to be anywhere else in the world.' "It was unbelievable but I told myself I'm just going to keep on going."

Tragedy took Jim from his home in Mthatha near the east coast of South Africa Western Cape as a teenager, but it would prove to be the place his sporting dream crystallized. After losing both his mother and father in the space of two years he moved 1,200 km to Khayelitsha, the country's largest township, to live with his aunt. Soon after the sight of those 35,000 riders sweeping past his home had ignited in him a desire to discover cycling, he was introduced to the [Velokhaya project](#), which aims to help disadvantaged kids become champions on and off the bike. Jim was desperate to throw himself into competition right away. There was just one problem -- he had no idea how to cycle. "When I actually saw people riding, to me it was like 'Why are these people riding bikes? What's going on here?' and then I actually joined them," he explained. "But when I did it was weird because I didn't even know how to ride a bike because I never knew anything about bikes."

It is no surprise that despite the treacherous conditions in his first World Tour race, Jim's dedication to the cause was absolute. After some promising junior results, and finishing third in the African Championships in 2012, he swapped his home in South Africa for the Italian town of Lucca, near Pisa, in order to train harder and smarter. By the end of his Milan-San Remo appearance the cold had taken such a grip on him that he had to be helped out of his cycling threads by the director of his MTN-Qhubeka team, Africa's first pro-continental outfit.

He was not able to finish the race, which was shortened due to the weather, but he had played his part in helping teammate Gerald Ciolek to claim victory.

"It was just an unbelievable feeling, especially for me to be part of the team," Jim said.

His passion for the sport has helped in his battle to overcome the traumatic events that visited him at such a tender age. "For me to lose my parents at a young age, it was one the biggest challenges I've had to face in my life," he said. "To grow up without the support of a parent, it was very difficult, but then I actually got to know the sport of cycling, that's when I decided, 'OK I just have to do this.' No-one is able to ride the bike apart from you -- even if my parents were there they wouldn't ride the bike for me -- so at the end of the day it just depends what you want in life. There's no point feeling sorry for yourself and people are not going to feel sorry for you. I decided I just have to do what I have to do because I love the sport."

Jim's feats have not gone unnoticed back in South Africa, and press interest in him has been extensive. It'll go through the roof if he fulfills his ultimate ambition to make it to the Tour de France. With his profile rising like his career, he hopes he can now prove an inspiration for other kids with similarly challenging lives in the townships of South Africa and encourage a wave of interest in the sport. "There are very few black cyclists that are in the sport," he said. "The first reason is this sport is really expensive. "In order to become a cyclist, it requires you to be dedicated and your family to be behind you because you have to buy bikes, helmets and shoes. "Second of all, if I could go back to me, at the age of 13 you don't even know what cycling is and you don't even know there's a sport that exists that's called cycling. "At least now there are more people recognizing me so when I go back to Eastern Cape they ask me questions and I start to tell them everything. "It's improving but there's still a lot that needs to be done. It would be great for me to see a lot of black South Africans in the sport."

Taken from: <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/04/17/sport/songezo-jim-cycling-africa-tour/index.html>

MEETING OF 18 APRIL 2013

Attendance

Membership	23
Present	17
Make ups	1
Apologies	6
Attendance	74%

Visitors: Alan Jackson, Brian Howard, Mike Roberts (Guest Speaker)

Rotaractors: Keela, Jessica, Kerri, Lee, Chrisleen, Sakeenah, Ava, Raihaanah, Leche, Justin, Robyn, Lauren, Lauren J, Zaynab and friends, Robyn P, Stephen.

Attendance to Biffy 082 468 7504 or aecon.e@mweb.co.za.

Pres. Mike welcomed all, and especially the extended Rotary family of Wynberg Rotaract Club, who very nearly exceeded our own numbers present!

Serg. Dave at 18.45, as the meeting commenced, reminded all that meetings start at 18.30. The meeting on 25 April will start at 18.30 too..... (*you could have heard a pin drop! – Ed.*)

SLOTS

Graham said that at close of business on 18 April some 900 tickets had been sold for Proms. This leaves about 750 to go. He is very satisfied with the good media coverage.

Pres. Mike reminded Graham that Sunday's Proms on 12 May is Mothers' Day; and maybe this could feature in pre-Proms advertising?

John had a message from Mathilde, one of the Oddemarka students who stayed with the Vivians recently. The visiting group are motivating an even larger donation to Wynberg Rotary Club next year from Oddemarka school.

Pam encouraged anybody who has access to places for display of posters to please take a few of the Proms posters and put them up in prominent view.

GUEST SPEAKER

Mike Roberts is an Oceanographer with impressive qualifications too numerous to include here! He started off by explaining that formerly people involved with ocean study, by definition had to be at the coast. No more: with satellite surveillance at the level that it is now, they can be stationed anywhere – and don't even get their feet wet!

Mike's address covered the interesting topic of 'bottom water', the high salt content cold water from the poles which sinks to the lowest chasms of the world's oceans and travels like a conveyor belt back to its starting point over a period of some 10 000 years, which is the approximate period between Ice Ages.

14 000 years ago a series of coincidental factors caused this 'conveyor belt' to stop moving. This in turn caused severe global climate change over the course of just a few years. An immediate question amongst oceanographers is "Is it happening again....?"

The Agulhas current, flowing southwards along the east coast of Africa is the strongest ocean current on earth, moving approx. 100 000 cu m/sec of warm water from the Indian ocean into the south Atlantic ocean. R100 million worth of submarine equipment is currently (sorry – Ed.) being installed between South Africa and Brazil to assess the amount of heat transferred to the Atlantic. It is a major factor influencing the movement and character of the 'bottom water', and also climate patterns, especially in the southern hemisphere.

There were many questions following such an interesting topic; one of which was whether the huge potential of power associated with the Agulhas current could be harnessed? In fact it is being addressed. This ocean current moves at an average 4 knots, which could drive underwater turbines, but it would generate very expensive electricity – about 10 times more than even Eskom charges now!

Mike was introduced by Karen and thanked by Rob.

PROGRAMME

April 2013	Committee: Barnard, Bird, Hovstad, Michalowsky, Wetmore
Thursday 25	Normal meeting: visit by GSE team from Japan
May 2013	Committee: Knight, Bredenkamp, Cleveland, Munday, Orsmond
2 May	Business meeting
9 May	Lindsey Houchin, Ambassadorial scholar from Kentucky & Lindsey Elkin from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania / Rotary Family Health Day
11 & 12 May	Last Night of the Proms in the City Hall
16 May	Allison Ballard, Ambassadorial scholar from Washington, USA

17-19 May	Conference
23 May	Board Meeting
25 May	Interact/Rotaract/Rotary action sports day
30 May	Social

June 2013	Committee: James, Danckwerts, Schreiber, Smith, Williams, Lidgley
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6 June	Normal meeting: speaker booked – details to follow
13 June	Brett Glasby, SPCA Wildlife Unit: “Unusual catches” Also lots of visitors
20 June	Induction Dinner
27 June	Board meeting

DUTY ROSTER

	25 April	2 May	9 May	16 May	30 May (social)	6 June
Sergeant	Overbosch	Todd	Smith	Cleveland	Overbosch	Gowdy
Attendance Officer	Danckwerts	Danckwerts	Danckwerts	Danckwerts	Danckwerts	Danckwerts
Wynpress Editorial	Vivian	Michalowsky	Munday	Overbosch	Smith	Todd
Minutes for Wynpress	Danckwerts	Danckwerts	Knight	Cleveland	Danckwerts	Knight
Compilation of Wynpress	Cleveland	Danckwerts	Danckwerts	Knight	Cleveland	Danckwerts
Door Duty	Van Eeden	James	Bird	Michalowsky	Munday	Hovstad
Grace	James	Danckwerts	Gowdy	Hovstad	James	Murphy
Loyal Toast	Murphy	Gowdy	Hovstad	James	Barnard	Knight
International Toast	Munday	Van Eeden	Knight	Michalowsky	Munday	Overbosch
Speaker Introduction	James	N/A	Murphy	Van Eeden	TBA	TBA
Speaker Thanks	Barnard	N/A	Williams	Lidgley	TBA	TBA

IF YOU CANNOT MAKE YOUR ROSTERED DATE, PLEASE SWAP WITH ANOTHER ROTARIAN AND INFORM THE DUTY SERGEANT

JACKPOT

With 10 cards left and the Jackpot at R3115, the elusive King of Hearts remained so. Francois only managed the Queen of Hearts; and Justin won the handful of small change.

(NOT THE) PRESIDENT'S QUOTE

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes"

- Marcel Proust

TAILPIECE

As we age, is this what we're going to become?????

One night a nurse was making her rounds in a nursing home. While walking down the hall, she came across an open door.

She looked in and saw old Frank sitting up in bed pretending to drive. She asked, 'Frank, what are you doing?'

He replied, 'I'm driving to New York . '

The nurse smiled at him and carried on making her rounds.

The next night as she walked past Frank's room she saw the same thing. Again she asked, 'Frank, what are you doing?'

He replied, 'I'm driving to New York . It's a two day trip, you know!'

The nurse smiled at him and carried on making her rounds.

Five minutes later she came across another open door and looked in. She saw Bob pretending to dance with someone. She then asked, 'Bob, what are you doing?'

Bob said, 'I'm dancing with Frank's wife. He's gone to New York for a couple of days.'

