

SA stars boost Eastern Cape golf development

South Africa's leading golfers have again answered the call from golf development, teaming up to support the growth of the game in the Eastern Cape.

At the official gala dinner for the Africa Open, Retief Goosen, Louis Oosthuizen and Charl Schwartzel announced their joint donation of R100 000 to golf development in the region. "The Africa Open has done an amazing job in bringing top professional golf back to the Eastern Cape, and as players we feel strongly about continuing this process by giving the children here something to aspire to in the game, and also the means to do so," said double US Open champion Goosen.

Councillor Zukisa Faku, the Executive Mayor of Buffalo City, was delighted with the announcement.

"We share a common pride for an event that has come to represent honour and prestige for the people of Buffalo City, indeed for the people of the entire Amathole District.

"The Africa Open has been a story of successful cooperation between local government, the private sector and the national and international golfing fraternity.

"We need to concentrate the willing efforts of national and international professionals in a programme to establish a golf academy here in Buffalo City.

"We have to think outside the box to anchor golf as an alternative sport for our youth, allowing them to graduate from the pro-ams to the professional stage."

Khaya Ngqula, the promoter of the Africa Open, also announced the formation of The Richer Future Foundation, which aims to provide further impetus to golf development initiatives in this region.

"The Foundation will focus on golf, and other sports, that can help with deserving causes in this region. We have taken the time to think carefully about this to make sure it runs professionally and makes the kind of real impact it needs to."

Both Oosthuizen and Schwartzel were also delighted to partner development initiatives in this region, having both been involved in the Development Golf Clinic at the start of this year's tournament, where they and other professionals hosted children from the South African Golf Development Board.

"These are our future champions and we feel honoured to be able to share our time and resources with them in helping them to achieve their goals," said Oosthuizen.

"We all had to start somewhere, with somebody giving us help. I'm proud to be able to do the same now," added Schwartzel.