



KWAZULU-NATAL GYMNASTICS UNION

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From: KZNGU Office / Board / G Adamson
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Transformation

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At the KZNGU elections recently I was elected as the WTC member in charge of transformation in KZN. Since transformation is going to be increasingly relevant in terms of quotas in National teams, it seems that there is little point trying to increase the numbers of black gymnasts in the lower levels program, as it is at National team level where we will need them.

Girls need to be 13 years old to compete in the Junior Olympic section. Here is my plan to have quite a few KZN black girls in the system within the next 7 years.

Each club in KZN is asked to find 3 black girls born in 2007/8/9 from the closest school to the club. These girls must then be trained and compete as class 1 next year. Bear in mind transformation kids need not be poor...if you can find rich black kids at your nearest school, you do not have any excuse not to get going!

From our experience it is possible to do a reasonably good job of class 1 on 3 days per week. So this would be the initial amount of time needed. It is also possible to take ordinary girls and make them into good class 1 competitors if they are on an extra-ordinary program. However, I propose that some talent identification be undertaken so that the task is easier for those who have not yet tried high performance levels.

I am very willing to go to the schools and help with talent identification (step 3 below) if necessary, but the clubs should do the groundwork first. (steps 1 and 2)

1. Contact the closest school and ask permission to come and do talent ID with girls living close to the school/club who are born in the target years. This testing should be completed in the third school term, so that training can begin in the fourth term once all the competitions are over.
2. Send letters home with all these targeted girls, asking for parental permission to test them and explaining that they will be required to train 3 afternoons per week and that



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will be given a bursary for their expenses for the first year. Tell them also that the girls will be re-evaluated after a year and will be accepted for a further year if they have made suitable progress and if they are happy. Have a reply slip which must be signed or no testing will be done.

3. Test the girls and select the best 3. Send letters of congratulations home and the date of the first class. Send letters to the next best three saying that you cannot offer them bursaries, but their children have been placed on a waiting list in case somebody drops out. Keep their details! This means you do not have to re-test if somebody leaves the program.
4. Find a coach or parent in the club who will take responsibility for getting the girls home after training if the parents do not have cars. This is vitally important as in winter it gets dark early and it is risky for girls to be walking home. Parents will not buy into any scheme that does not provide for safe transport home.

I hope at least some of the clubs will take up the challenge of creating high performance black gymnasts. Thekwini Club would be most willing to assist with training coaches and running regular workshops to assess progress of the gymnasts, should there be a need.

I am also happy to provide examples of letters to the school/parents if needed.

Kind regards

Gail Adamson

