

This is where you will grow

The ninth St David's Marist Inanda Fasken Time Cricket festival began in the customary way on Thursday with everyone meeting for breakfast in the school hall, before the teams dispersed to begin the first of the two two-day matches that they will be playing over the next four days.

It's become traditional to invite a guest speaker to address the boys at the event, and there have been some big names in cricket doing that down the years. Temba Bavuma has been here, as has Jacques Rudolph and Heinrich Klaasen.

This year it was one of South Africa's very best - Kagiso Rabada.

He never played at the Fasken tournament but, he explained, he fully understands the importance of time cricket and he believes that it is in playing a longer-format that the really



important lessons are taught.

"I'm excited about the opportunities that lie ahead of you. You will be challenging yourselves against your opponents in new ways and your

skills will be tested to the full," he said.

It's important in life, he said, that you are always learning and growing and cricket, with its complexity and multiple challenges is an excellent way of learning and growing.

"You should never just fill a space on the field. Everyone has a role to play and winning requires many things to happen properly.

"That's what makes cricket the most difficult game of all. You have to move with purpose, and in Test cricket you have to do that over a five day period."

This festival is a good way to be introduced to that, he concluded.

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FIXTURES

Game 1 (3 and 4 September)

St David's Marist vs St Andrew's School (La Valla)
St John's College vs Hoërskool Waterkloof (Mitchell)
St Stithians College vs Clifton College (Dlamini)
KES vs Lions Invitational XI (Gier)
Jeppe High School for Boys vs Hoërskool Middelburg (Tamba Bavuma)
Hoërskool Noordheuwel vs St Charles College (Le Rosey)

Game 2 (5 and 6 September)

St David's Marist vs Hoërskool Middelburg (La Valla Oval) St
John's College vs Clifton College (Mitchell Oval)
St Stithians College vs St Charles College (Dlamini Oval)
KES vs St Andrew's School (Tamba Bavuma Oval)
Jeppe High School for Boys vs Lions Invitational XI (Le Rosey Oval)
Hoërskool Noordheuwel vs Hoërskool Waterkloof (Gier Oval).

It's more than just the result

These players are getting a taste of the purest form of the game

THEO GARRUN

The St David's Marist Inanda Fasken Time Cricket Festival features declaration matches played over two days.

It is called time cricket because there is a time limit on the play that takes place. In international "Test" matches that limit is five days. Each side has two innings and to win the game a team has to bowl the opposition out, twice, for less runs than it scored.

Within those parameters there are all sorts of scenarios that can take place including innings being declared over by the captain while his side still has wickets in hand, and targets being set for the opposition to chase.

And if the team batting last is not out, and the target hasn't been reached, then the game is a draw - at the end of five days.

The amazing thing is that cricket people (the purists, anyway) love it. So do the international players - they make their living out of shorter formats of the game, but just about every time you hear one of them being asked, they say Test cricket is what the game is all about.

The Fasken Festival presents an opportunity for schoolboy players to get a taste of that kind of cricket.

It's school sport, of course, and school sport should be about education first, competition second. That's not to say that winning isn't important, it is the point of playing, but it's not the only thing. The lessons that can be learnt are more important



than the result.

The shorter formats of the game require certain skills and they always produce results. There's a danger however, that winning can become too important and that the values that the game teaches are left behind.

It doesn't have to be that way, however. Cricket has the potential to be a great educational tool, and at the good schools the coaches see it that way.

Which is the great thing about this festival. It was born out of a recognition that the cricketing education of school boys is incomplete if they are fed a diet of limited-overs cricket only. But it also recognises that school cricket can and must teach other lessons too.

The learnings are well articulated in the festival brochure - things like building an innings, bowling an intense spell, and coming back to do it again later; fielding for an entire

day, and coming back to do it again tomorrow; and for the captains, the art of declaration - risking loss to give yourself a chance of victory, and buying a wicket by keeping your run-leaking spinner on a while longer.

Think of the business lessons in those last two points.

It's a cricket tradition to appreciate your opponents - the players will applaud an opponent when he scores a 50 or 100, in which other game do you get that?

And that's another point that the Fasken Festival intentionally makes. The players are told to watch their opponents appreciatively all day and decide who performed the best out of them. And after the day's play, their captain will present him with a purple cap and they will applaud him.

Who cares if at the end of the two days the game is drawn - those little presentation ceremonies alone are victories, in my eye.



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Three of the best in 2025



The 2025 individual prize winners: Steele Grooteman (KES), Bowler of the Festival; Jason Rowles (St David's), Player of the Festival; and Tiago Dias (KES), Batsman of the Festival.

The Fasken Time Festival is a festival, with no overall winner or loser.

The idea, according to St David's director of cricket, Mr Dave Nosworthy - the tournament director - is to develop individual skills through the special demand that the longer format of the game places on players.

School cricket these days is dominated by limited overs matches and competitions, and although some schools do play declaration games on Saturdays, they tend to be the exception.

"These two-day games allow batsmen to build an innings," Mr Nosworthy said. "Bowlers have longer spells, and they can come back and

bowl later, and fielders get to feel what it's like to be on their feet for an entire day."

It has been a tradition at the festival to make three individual awards - bowler of the tournament, batsman of the tournament and player of the tournament - and to give those awards to the players who demonstrate a firm grasp of the skills that the longer format aims to teach, the skills required to play "proper" cricket.

Kit and equipment sponsors at the 2025 festival - Admiral - provided a generous bundle of prizes to all three recipients and they were named at the end of play on the final day on Sunday.

The most economical figures came from Kind Edward's Steele Grooteman, who took 5/35 against Clifton, to go with his 4/48 in the first innings.

Those figures helped him to best economy rate, and the most wickets in the two matches, and he was named the Bowler of the Tournament.

Tiago Dias, also of KES was 78 not out in the second innings against Clifton, and 101 not out in the first. He totalled 109 in his first match, which meant he was the top run-scorer, with the best strike rate, and he was named the Batsman of the Tournament.

Jason Rowles of St David's Marist Inanda was the Player of the Tournament. He scored the second-most runs, in fewer knocks, and also took wickets cheaply and he captained his side to two excellent wins.



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