

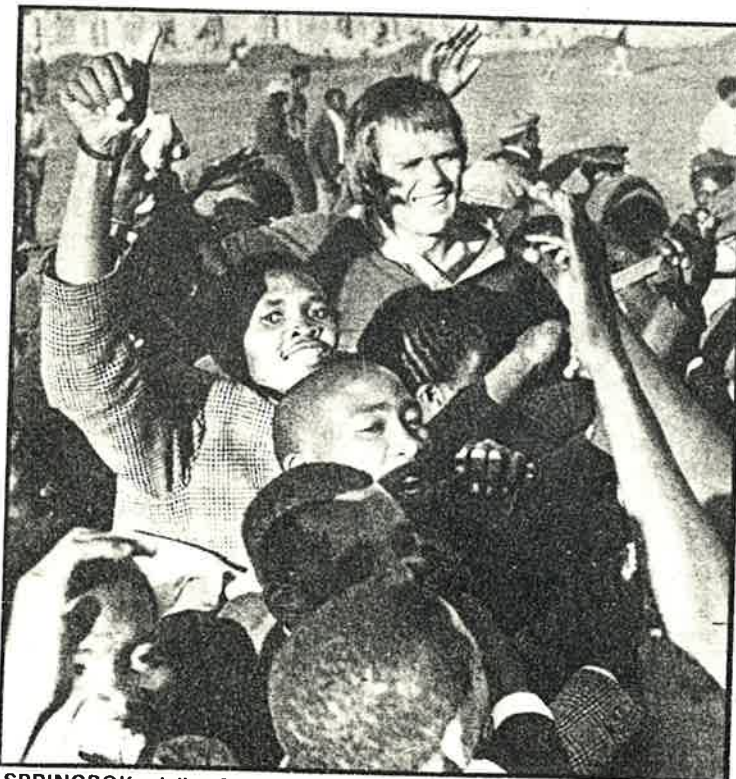
CHEEKY SHOWS US THE SOUTH AFRICA OF THE FUTURE (WE HOPE)



EASTERN Province player Valence Watson, Cheeky's brother, gets a taste of hero-worship at the end of the historic game.



Dan "Cheeky" Watson strides through the field, beating Sedru defenders to score the best try of the match during the friendly game. The white player trying to stop him is Al Weakley of Rhodes University. 10 000 people saw the historic match at Port Elizabeth's African township.



SPRINGBOK trialist Cheeky Watson is carried shoulder high off the field by jubilant black fans after the historic racially mixed rugby match played at Port Elizabeth's African township, two months ago.

HE loved rugby but he was a bit on the small side for the game. But he was determined so he adopted an aggressive approach to the game to make up for his physical shortcomings. This was why his friends named the boy Cheeky. The name has stuck.

It is the same approach to do what he wants, the way he wants to, against whatever odds that has earned 22-year-old Cheeky Watson Drum's Trendsetter of the Year Award.

Cheeky and his brother Vallance who play for the white Port Elizabeth rugby team Crescent, coached the local African side Kwaru. The team won the league this season.

When the team played a friendly match with another team to celebrate its victory Cheeky, Vallance and six other white players volunteered to play in the game.

The eight players thought there would be no hassles since there had already been word from Pretoria giving the green light to mixed rugby.

When the authorities got wind of this they put their foot down. Matches between teams of different races okay. But definitely no mixed

teams, was the order.

The president of Cheeky's team warned him against playing and so did rugby boss Dr Craven. Dr Piet Koornhof, Minister of Sport also sounded a last minute warning that the eight would be playing at their own peril if they did so.

But running true to form Cheeky and his brigade defied. 10 000 black spectators cheered their voices hoarse at the historic game.

Cheeky scored three tries for his side. But what matters more is that each goal was a good kick in the teeth for segregated sports. He scored something more than ordinary goals in the match.

After the match all players were threatened with suspension by their union.

"They can keep their rugby. We'll do it again because we play for the love of the game." Acting as spokesman of the threatened players Watson gave the authorities his bit of cheek.

"All we are trying to prove is that rugby can be enjoyed by both races playing harmoniously," Cheeky said.

And how Cheeky and his buddies have proved this, and 10 000 people can't be wrong, can they?