

Mobile Diski Striker spreads 2010 vibe

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14 Jan 2010

An eye-catching minibus with a difference is currently zipping around Johannesburg, South Africa, to teach the public about the history of the beautiful game and build excitement ahead of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, which kicks off in June 2010.



The Diski Striker vehicle is doing its bit to raise excitement for the upcoming 2010 Fifa World Cup.

The vehicle, which used to belong to the City of Johannesburg's private fleet, has been kitted out in the colours of the South African flag, with side panelling that resembles a football and a giant black dung beetle on its rooftop. It's called the Diski Striker - "diski" is the local township slang word for football.

The Diski Striker's football-shaped exterior is inscribed with interesting facts about the history of football across the world and new South African football trends, such as makarapas and vuvuzelas.

It explains how the game of football developed and gives information on the various World Cups, starting with the inaugural tournament in 1930 - which Uruguay won - until 2006, when Italy became the champions in the German-hosted Cup.

Peter Hall, head of the City of Johannesburg-owned James Hall Transport Museum, came up with the idea of the Diski Striker and developed it in April 2009. "The museum runs a lot of projects around education, and I knew that we had to do something for the World Cup," he said.

Spreading football fever

"The vehicle has a means to communicate with the communities," said Hall. "Children learn a lot from it."

It took Hall and his team at the museum six weeks to transform and revive the minibus, which had been destined for demolition. Their job included painting the vehicle, adding the metal football panelling to the sides and attaching the dung

beetle to the roof. The friendly-looking beetle replica is made from steel, wire and fibreglass.

Diski Striker was finally unveiled to the public in November last year and has been a familiar site on the city's roads ever since.

It has travelled around Orange Farm in the south of Johannesburg, about 45km from the city centre, and visited other disadvantaged areas in the city like Diepsloot and Alexandra townships. "It will also do a road show through these areas," said Sue Reddy, a senior specialist at the City of Johannesburg's Arts, Culture and Heritage department.

"Diski Striker is used to educate and engage people on the big picture of the forthcoming 2010 event," Reddy said. "The project is intended to add to a lasting soccer legacy."

Busy schedule

With fewer than 150 days left until the World Cup kicks off, the Diski Striker has a busy schedule.

Driven by the museum's David Rikhotso and at times by Hall himself, the minibus stops at shopping malls, schools and other public areas around the city, such as parks. During each trip vuvuzelas and footballs - sponsored by the City of Johannesburg - are handed out to fans along the way.

The museum has also launched an educational bus that is circuiting city schools and recreation centres to spread interesting information about the upcoming football spectacular.

Hall said they are developing a mobile television bus, which they hope to launch soon. "It will be a moving fan park for children [during the World Cup]."

The James Hall Transport Museum, situated in La Rochelle southeast of Johannesburg, details the history of transportation in Johannesburg over the centuries and the Diski Striker will become one of the museum exhibits after the World Cup. "It will definitely be part of the history and heritage of the country," Hall said.

Source: MediaClubSouthAfrica.com

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