

Goliath Gaming's Ashton Muller makes significant strides

 By [Emily Stander](#)

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Across the world, video games have gained significant traction and popularity in popular culture. As a result, competitive gaming has become an important part of playing video games. In particular, young people have the opportunity to make a career in e-sports, often starting as players for world-class teams and moving on to become managers and coaches once they retire.



Ashton Muller, co-founder and co-manager of Goliath Gaming

This is no different in South Africa. Locally, we have multiple tournaments alive and well for multiple titles - and multi gaming organisations (MGO) who are looking to support their players in their goals and ambitions. Goliath Gaming (GG) is one such MGO who has made waves internationally, giving local players a platform to succeed in multiple titles.

Ashton 'Golz' Muller, the co-founder and co-manager of GG, gives us insights into how the MGO functions and effectively provides this platform for their players to succeed.

What does your role entail, and what does your average day at work look like?

I am a co-founder and co-manager of Goliath Gaming. We are a multi gaming organisations which has some of South Africa's best competitive players. Under our banner, we support titles like FIFA, Fortnite, Street Fighter, Tekken, StarCraft and Counter-Strike. Most of the players who play under our name have competed in global tournaments abroad and flown the SA flag high.

My role is to handle various key operations for GG, which include business management, player management, player development, and brand collaborations and marketing. No two days are the same - and that keeps things interesting.

What do you love most about your work?

I love seeing the success of our players in their respective gaming and personal goals. To be a part of their journey in

some way is something I'm very grateful for. I love that this is possible in the gaming and e-sports world.

I also love working within an industry that is so young and fresh, which holds so much potential – not just for the players and teams, but for brands too!

■ ***Can you tell us a bit about your e-sports career prior to your current role?***

I started playing competitively at the age of 16. Although I'm almost 30 now, it wasn't until 2014 that I started competing at the highest level locally and won my first competition playing Counter-Strike. Shortly after that my team at the time was invited to the Electronic Sports World Cup in Paris, France. It was here where I realised that I wanted to try this at a professional level with the hopes of competing against the best in the world.

Shortly after the ESWC, I joined Bravado Gaming. At the time, they were the top gaming team in South Africa and had won multiple local tournaments. We went on to compete at multiple international events by the end of 2016, and I was able to travel the world playing games competitively.

In 2017 my time as an aspiring competitive gamer came to an end when I parted ways with my team. Shortly after that I followed my ambitions to build my own MGO – and now we are here, with Goliath Gaming.

■ ***How would you define Goliath Gaming as a brand?***

GG is a very diverse, young and fresh brand.

We manage some of South Africa's best competitive gamers in various titles. Our players range between ages as young as 11 to early 30's. We have true diversity and extensive representation in our organisation, and that allows us to see perspectives from all walks of life beyond the e-sports space.

We work with brands like Acer, Predator, Nike, EasyEquities, Oakley, and more to provide support to our players and teams. The partnerships we have with these brands have given us insight into how diverse GG is, and the broad appeal we have across areas like gaming and tech, lifestyle, and sportswear.

■ ***What are the long term goals of GG as a brand?***

Primarily, we are setting out to win tournaments and become one of the most recognisable and successful competitive e-sports teams and brands in South Africa. In addition to that, we want to build a gaming organisation with purpose. We want to make a change in society and influence the lives and career paths of youth toward gaming and e-sports. We are already laying what foundations we can in this regard, and have some exciting projects planned for the months to come.

■ ***How does GG impact the South African e-sports climate?***

Goliath Gaming is one of the many cogs in the South African gaming and e-sports space.

I would say the biggest impact we have is on the players. We offer a proud home that a player can share with other like-minded athletes. This develops into a support structure which enables them to put their focus into their craft and themselves.

■ ***Can you share some recent GG achievements and what they mean for the South African esports scene?***

We've been fortunate enough to hit many milestones with all our players. These are some recent highlights:

- In May, we hosted a free Game Development Workshop with Predator Gaming and Billionaire Developers. This saw people of all ages and skill levels learning to code Python, from the start. This was an important project for us because it directly links to our long term goal of showcasing the various career opportunities that are available to the youth, beyond just being a competitive gamer.
- Julio 'Beast' Bianchi, our FIFA captain, was one of the first South Africans to qualify and represent SA in the official FIFA eClub World Cup in February 2021
- Thabo Moloi from our FIFA squad was signed as the first ever Red Bull Gaming Athlete on the African continent.
- Our Fighting Games player, Jabhi 'JabhiM' Mabuza, won the Red Bull Hit The Streets international qualifier in 2020 and will be heading overseas (Covid-willing) in 2021 to compete.

■ ***What advice would you give to aspiring e-sports players and MGO managers?***

Stop worrying about what you think others want you to do, and just focus on doing what you are passionate about. Time invested and working hard trumps potential. You know the saying – hard work beats talent when talent isn't working hard!

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

Freelancer specialising in games and entertainment | My first loves are writing, music and video games

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