

## **Replacement of the Soccer/Rugby goal posts at the Stadiums in the Village Precinct and Maximum Security Precinct**

### **1. Historical perspective of the Soccer/Rugby sport fields on the Island**

All Ex-political Prisoners that were incarcerated on the Island agree that different sporting codes have a strong footing on the history of Robben Island. The formation of the General Recreational Committee in the early 1960's must have been a vehicle to the formation of Makana Football Association in 1963 which started operating in 1966. This saw soccer as one of the most played sports on the Island. The league had three divisions, A, B and C, based on players' ability. It was a complete league, with trainers, managers, referees and coaches. The league was a replica of the outside world, had several standing committees to deal with a range of issues *i.e.* discipline and maintenance of the fields. The referees were trained according to the FIFA standards.

Soccer games were a valuable opportunity for Prisoners to reinforce their unity, promote values of respect, integrity, teamwork and fair play. Numerous interviews with former prisoners have identified that sport, and particularly soccer matches, were initially influenced by the rivalry between the differing political affiliations of the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress. According to the F-Section Ex-Political Prisoners Reference Group, dominance rivalry between their section and their neighbouring G-Section was always settled on the sporting field as they always went head-to-head with each other to prove sporting superiority one above the other. Over time, sportsmanship became the unifying common denominator between the groups. Different political parties could differ on critical debates on the resistance tactics used against the prison authorities, but in sport they would train together and be united with one common goal. It is in soccer games where Prisoners could visualise how the futuristic and post apartheid South Africa would look like.

As the time went by, Prisoners were allowed to play other sporting codes *i.e.* rugby, volleyball and tennis. All these sporting codes became one of the important activities during the imprisonment of each and every single individual on the Island. Passion for the sports helped to shape the consciousness of many inmates and brought character and leadership values to the ones playing, but also to the ones that were the supporters of these rival clubs.

The consultation held with the Ex-political Prisoners (see accompanying minutes of the meeting) is in agreement with both rugby and soccer posts in Figure 1 and 2. The rugby posts were white standard "H" structured, while soccer posts were moveable with elbows for nets and to give balance to the structure. The soccer posts were striped in black and white with green nets.

On the northern part of the rugby stadium where Officers use to play, the remnant of badly corroded structure is still visible. The consultation done with one of the Ex-officers, Mr Christo Brand confirmed that the rugby stadium consisted of a standard "H" structured rugby posts. According to

Moolman 2001 (veteran former prison warder) the sports fields have been there all the time. The rugby field, the tennis club, the netball court and everything has been there since the navy years.

As part of enhancing the narrative of the site, this document motivates the replacement of rugby/soccer goal posts at both the Village Precinct Rugby Field and Maximum Security Prison Soccer/Rugby Field.



Figure 1: Original goal posts at the Maximum Security Prison



Figure 2: The picture of the original goal posts at the Maximum Security Prison



Figure 3: The Rugby Stadium at the Village Precinct

## 2. Current status of the Rugby/Soccer posts at both the Maximum Security Prison and the Village Precinct Sport Fields

### a) Maximum Security Prison

The activities that took place on the Soccer/ Rugby field are part of the narrative to Tourists that visit the Island. The story is narrated by the Ex-political Prisoners that talk from their experiences.

Currently there are no goal posts that indicate that both rugby and soccer were utilised for sporting events; it is just an open field with the seats on the side. At least 75% of the stadium is still covered by the native kweek grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) which is indigenous on the Island and also originally covered the fields.

#### **b) Rugby stadium at the Village Precinct**

The remaining rugby post on the northern end of the stadium is badly corroded. However, it is still evident (from the remaining structure) that the goal posts were “H” structured and all white in colour as a standard rugby post. The field has been recently rehabilitated from alien invasive plants and long term plan is to re-vegetate it with native kweek grass which originally covered the stadium.



Figure 4: The current look of the rugby posts at the Village Precinct Stadium

### **3. Intervention required on both the Rugby Field at the Village Precinct and Soccer/Rugby Field at the Maximum Security Prison.**

The main objective is to have authentic replacement of goal posts at both the fields. Guided by desktop studies and consultative meetings with Ex-political Prisoners and an Ex-officer, the following specifications for goal posts replacements were formulated:

#### **a) ‘H’ Rugby posts with ground sleeves**

- 12m in height (3 metres from the ground to the top edge of the bar and 9 metres from the bar to the top) excluding the sleeved section.
- Ground sleeves – 800mm deep galvanised.
- Crossbar – 57x1.6mm round tube.
- Uprights – 101x2mm/89x2mm/76x2mm/63x2mm/57x1.6mm/50x1.6mm round tube.
- Galvanised, Painted with Metal coat 2 in 1 primer & white top coat
- Weight – 200 kilograms.
- 5.6m distance between the upri

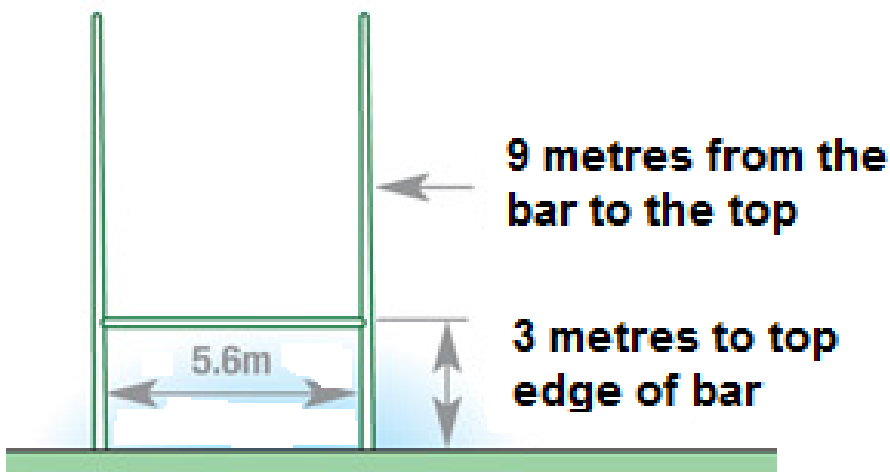


Figure 5: Artistic impression of the rugby posts

**b) Portable soccer posts (7.32m x 2.44m—Inside measurements )**

- 101 x 2mm round tube frame construction.
- 50 x 1.6mm round tube back section.
- Galvanised, painted with Metal Coat 2 in 1 primer & striped black and white as a top coat.
- Weight – 180 kilograms.

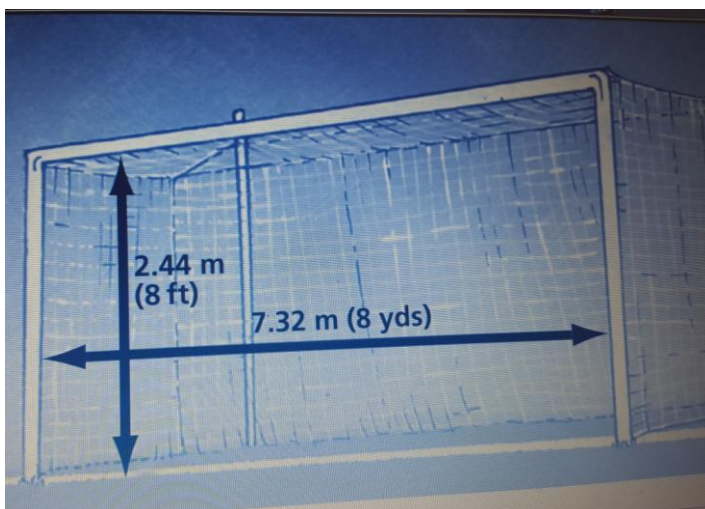


Figure 6: Artistic impression of the soccer goal posts

### c) Nets

- Colour: Green
- Mesh size: 120mm
- Thread thickness: 2.5mm

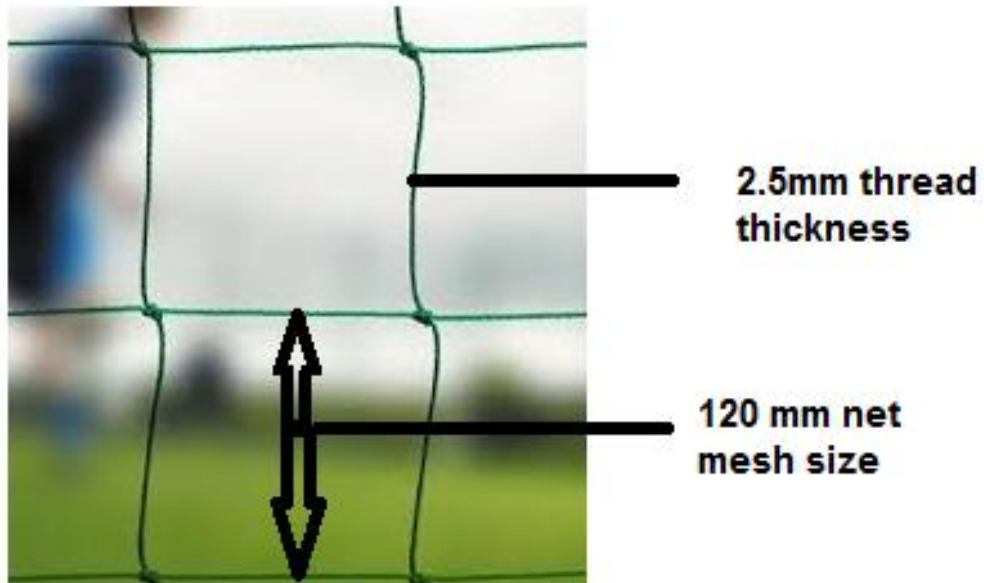


Figure 7: Mesh and thread size of the net

### 4. References

- a) FIFA Laws of the Game for 2015/16.
- b) World Rugby Union Laws of the Game.
- c) Soccer and Rugby Reference groups.
- d) Makana Football Association Constitution.