

Matthew Fortuin's journey from George to NWU rugby glory

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In the heart of George, amid the vibrant rugby culture, a star was born. Matthew Fortuin (22), hailing from this rugby-loving town, has recently been crowned the FNB Backline Player of the Year for his exceptional performance during the 2024 season with the NWU Rugby Institute Eagles. His dazzling display on the field earned him accolades but, more significantly, a hefty pay cheque of R7,500 for his efforts.

Matthew is studying Health Sciences, focusing on Sports Coaching and Human Movement Sciences at the NWU Potchefstroom Campus. Reflecting on his journey, he expressed gratitude, saying, "Thank you to everyone who has supported me throughout my journey, especially my parents."

His mother, Mary-Ann Fortuin, echoed the sentiment,

expressing immense pride in his achievements. "We are incredibly proud of Matthew and his accomplishments on the rugby field. He has worked tirelessly for this recognition, and we are grateful for the support of our community."

Matthew's roots run deep in rugby. Born into the rugby legacy of the Evergreens RFC in George, Matthew is the son of José Fortuin, a legend of the Evergreens RFC. Growing up in Pacaltsdorp, he attended Oakdale Agriculture School and, after that, Outeniqua High School (Kwaggas), where he honed his skills on the field. His journey led him to the North-West University, where he has been studying since last year.

Post school, Matthew's rugby journey took him to the WP Rugby Academy (WPRA), and he later represented the EP u.20 and Griffons in the u.21 teams. His prowess on the field continued to

shine as he became part of NWU's Varsity Cup team, clinching victory in 2023. Additionally, he has represented the Leopards' u.21 team, showcasing his versatility and skill.

Despite facing setbacks, like the injuries sustained during intense matches, Matthew remains determined to pursue his dreams.

"My dream is to play professionally for the Springboks," he reveals, undeterred by his challenges.

As the North-West University and the rugby community eagerly anticipate Matthew's return to the field, his story is an inspiration to aspiring athletes, showcasing the resilience, dedication, and spirit of the Potchefstroom community.

With each stride on the field, Matthew continues to write his chapter in the annals of South African rugby, proving that, with determination and perseverance, dreams can indeed become reality.



Matthew Luke Fortuin of NWU Pukke during the match between the FNB Pukke and FNB CUT at CUT Rugby Stadium in Bloemfontein. 25 March 2024.