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## DHL Lifesaving South African Championships to heat up Gqeberha

The 2022 DHL Lifesaving South African Championships will take place from 20-26 March in Gqeberha, home of action and adventure sports.

With more than 1500 of the country's lifesaving specialists competing in the surf and sand at Kings Beach, and at the pool events at Newton Park Swimming Pool, the Championships draws families from across the country in a celebration and culmination of the Lifesaving season.

The LSA Federation's executives Craig van Rooyen (LSA Director of Sport) and Helen Herbert (LSA General Manager) together with the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality; and Lifesaving SA's sponsors and partners, DHL, Treble Group, National Lotteries Commission, Department of Sport and Recreation and the Princess Charlene of Monaco Foundation SA, collectively have worked to ensure that all the championship events – both surf and pool – go ahead safely.

"It has been a great pleasure for our City to host this event as the biggest lifesaving event in Southern Africa after we got into a three year agreement with Lifesaving South Africa. This edition marks the last year of the three-year agreement and truly our partnership has been tested as we had to deliver an incident free event last amid the COVID-19 pandemic that brought along with it so many changes in our lives. We welcome the athletes and their families into our Friendly City and trust they will have a great experience once again. Our City is a great sports event destination and we definitely hope to host this huge sports event once again," said Nelson Mandela Bay Executive Mayor Eugene Johnson.

It will be the first time since March 2019 that the seven-day event will take place on its usual date, which occurs during the school holidays to accommodate the Junior and Nipper divisions. There were no spectators permitted last October at the 2021 Championships, but for the first time since 2019 a limited number of vaccinated fans – in accordance with Government Gazetted regulations – will be allowed to cheer on their lifesaving heroes.

Johnson continued, "We are happy to see the event take place during its usual season, this gives us hope that normalcy is upon us and that all the industries that benefit from this event including the hospitality industry will get a boost once again."

"I am proud to be part of such a prestigious event been hosted in our friendly city once again, I look forward to welcoming all the athletes, officials, and members of our federation to our city, wonderful beach and pool facility. LSA has worked hard together with our partners to ensure we offer a world class event as we have done so in the past. I am looking forward to action packed events, top athletes, and great competition over the 7 days in Gqeberha. We have implemented strict safety requirements and ensured protocols are in place to

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LIFESAVING SOUTH AFRICA



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host a safe and successful championship. Wishing all the members the best of luck, safe travels, and an enjoyable week at the event,” said Craig van Rooyen, LSA Director of Sport.

The competition will be tightly contested with several of LSA’s top athletes, who were part of the Proteas squad that were recently crowned as African champions at the 2022 Lifesaving Africa Championships held in February in Egypt, all in action at King’s Beach.

The bulk of the youthful LSA national squad will also gain much-needed competition with the ILS World Championships looming later this year in Italy. With a relatively inexperienced team, South Africa dominated the water events and was the main catalyst in the Proteas finishing the event in Egypt as champions of Africa, which bodes well for LSA’s high performance athletes in Italy and perhaps there may be one or two new members in that squad following the DHL Lifesaving Championships in Gqeberha.

Apart from the high-performance surf squad and elite pool squad on display at the DHL Lifesaving South African Championships, there will be stiff competition in the tightly contested Senior division, with Clifton Lifesaving Club out to defend their Senior title and further strengthen their dominance in the Junior division.

Last year’s overall champions – Gqeberha’s very own Summerstrand Lifesaving Club – will be a tough act to follow with the club’s powerful Nippers squad that completely dominated their division and will be looking to maintain their strong depth of talent, and grip on proceedings. The Nippers crushed the opposition in the surf and pool, scoring more than double the next best in totalling 710 points in the surf and 611 in the pool in the most comprehensive and complete collective display ever seen at the DHL Lifesaving South African Championships.

The absence of many KZN stars in 2021 due to Covid restrictions impacted on the overall club performance, with the KZN clubs of Durban Surf, Marine and Umhlanga finishing outside the top three. However, with the World Champs in Italy in October, the stakes will be high with several big KZN stars returning and the level of competition on display will be one of the major highlights come 20 March in Gqeberha.

#### Program of Events:

20 March: Masters Surf Competition (Kings Beach)

21 March: Opening Ceremony (Kings Beach)

21 March: Masters Pool Competition (Newton Park Pool)

21 March – 23 March: Nipper Surf Competition (Kings Beach)

21 March – 23 March: Juniors and Seniors Pool Competition (Newton Park Pool)

24 March – 26 March: Nipper Pool Competition (Newton Park Pool)

24 March – 26 March: Junior and Senior Surf Competition (Kings Beach)

24 March – 26 March: Surf Boat Competition (Kings Beach)

For more information visit [www.lifesaving.co.za](http://www.lifesaving.co.za) or follow Lifesaving South Africa on social media @LifesavingSouthAfrica



ENDS

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