

Sharks forced to focus on Currie Cup after Covid-19 debacle

The Witness

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Sharks coach Sean Everitt will be hoping for a good Currie Cup run after their Super Rugby Unlocked title campaign was ended by Covid-19.

Picture: Gallo Images

The Sharks have now shifted their focus to the Currie Cup after Covid-19 had the final say on who will be crowned as the champions of the inaugural Super Rugby Unlocked.

It's now an open secret that the Jake White-coached Bulls will walk away with the Unlocked title whatever the outcome of their meeting with the Pumas in Pretoria.

This after the match between fellow title contenders, Sharks and Stormers, was called off as a few players at King's Park Stadium tested positive for Covid-19 on Monday.

“We stringently followed the protocols set out by Saru and the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), and in line with that protocol this decision [to cancel the Stormers match] was best for everyone concerned.”

Sharks

The Durban-based franchise also said a large number of other senior team players came into close contact with the positive players, which led to Saru sending a strong warning to both players and management to be careful in their social engagement.

The developments at the Shark Tank meant coach Sean Everitt was left with no team to pick for the Stormers game on Saturday as most of the squad members are now in isolation.

Positive players will isolate for 14 days while those who have been in close contact with them quarantine for seven days.

In a statement, the Sharks said they are obviously saddened by the cancellation of the match but their focus is now on making sure they have a strong team to play against the Pumas when they kick off their Currie Cup campaign on Friday, November 27.

“The Sharks remain committed to fielding a competitive team for the start of the Carling Black Label Currie Cup next week.”

Sharks

“We stringently followed the protocols set out by Saru and the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), and in line with that protocol this decision was best for everyone concerned,” said the Sharks.

“Safety remains our number one priority and those that have tested positive in the team are isolating and will be monitored by our team doctor.

“The Sharks remain committed to fielding a competitive team for the start of the Carling Black Label Currie Cup next week.”

The Sharks will only get two points from the cancelled match, which means they will start the Currie Cup with 19 points as they carry the Unlocked points to the next competition.

Last week, three senior players from the Sharks were ruled out for the Griquas game after one returned a positive result and two others were close contacts.

Covid-19 has forced at least three Unlocked games to be cancelled, with the other two being the Lions' matches against Cheetahs and Pumas.