

New bike track will help kids

JOHNSON MESI

THE long awaited Velokhanya BMX oval and first of its kind to benefit the Khayelitsha community, was officially opened in the area on Friday.

The oval, situated in the heart of Khayelitsha, is alleged to be the brainchild of Glyn Broomberg and Amos Siqubu, the co-founders of the Life Cycling Academy which uses cycling to grow individuals and unleash their talent and potential.

The Life Cycle Academy is also the first and the only organisation to successfully developed a cyclist from previously disadvantaged background to compete at international level.

In June 2008 Luthando Kaka who rode a BMX bicycle at the age of eight, made history by becoming the first black South African cyclist to compete in Europe.

According to Broomberg the idea started five years ago when he and Ziqubu dreamt of creating a permanent facility that would make cycling more accessible to young people living in previously disadvantaged communities and now that dream was realised with the opening of the Velokhanya BMX Oval on Friday.

Broomberg said the depth of cycling in South Africa's townships is significant.

"Not only will the new BMX facility help discover future cycling heroes, but more importantly it will give township children access to much needed recreational facility, a place where they can have fun and learn new skills in a safe, secure environment."

Broomberg said sport based programmes have been shown to improve the learning performance of children, encouraging school attendance and a desire to succeed academically.

He said sport also teaches important life skills such as cooperation, leadership, respect for others, knowing how to win and lose and how to manage competition.

Amos Ziqubu is general manager of Life Cycle.



HIGHER AND HIGHER:Lwazi Mchithakali from Khayelitsha riding a BMX bike at a new Velokhanya BMX oval that was officially opened in Khayelitsha on Friday. **Picture: Hannes Munday.**