

# Olympic medallists get cash rewards

Koos Venter

Pretoria's golden swimming girl, Tatjana Schoenmaker, as well as South Africa's Olympic silver medallist surfer, Bianca Buitendag from the Southern Cape, officially received cash donations in Centurion last week that were collected through a private initiative to reward them for their performance at the recent Olympic Games in Tokyo.

The coaches of these two sports stars also received cash rewards.

A crowd-funding project named Spansaam ("team-up" in Afrikaans) of the real estate development company Atterbury and the sports nutrition company USN raised R1 050 000 for this purpose since kicking off early in August on the popular breakfast TV programme *Die GROOT Ontbyt*.

Spansaam was launched via the Atterbury Trust, a non-profit organisation, after the government and the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic

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Committee (SASCOC) initially indicated that they did not have money available to reward the country's Olympic medal winners, as has been done in the past.

The Spansaam project has received more than 100 payments from various organisations and individuals since it was launched.

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The official handover to the two Olympic medallists and their coaches took place last week at USN's offices, in Centurion.

Schoenmaker received R400 000 for her gold medal in the 200m-breaststroke event for women and R200 000 for her silver medal in

the 100m-breaststroke event.

Buitendag received R200 000 for the silver medal she won on her surfboard in Tokyo.

Rocco Meiring, who has coached Schoenmaker for the past 10 years, received R150 000 and Greg Emslie, Buitendag's coach, R50 000.

The remaining R50 000 will be allocated by way of a bursary to an upcoming athlete.

Due to the overwhelmingly positive response from ordinary people, businesses and community organisations, the Atterbury Trust will continue Spansaam as a fundraising platform for similar future initiatives to make up for governmental shortfalls, whether on the sports, culture or community front.