



Curtley Roberts from Pretoria will be in action at the 2019 Canon South Africa Disabled Golf Open.

Local disabled golf star gears up for South Africa

'My goal for the SA Disabled Open is to work hard and to keep on grinding, no matter what the situation.'

Describing the Disabled Golf Open as “the best part of the year”, Pretoria’s Curtley Roberts is up to the challenge of competing against some of the best golfers with disabilities from around the world.

The 2019 Canon South Africa Disabled Golf Open takes place from 13-16 May at the Magalies Park Golf Club.

The prestigious tournament has been organised by the South African Disabled Golf Association (SADGA) for 21 years and has been sponsored by Canon South Africa for the past three years.

“My goal for the SA Disabled Open is to work hard and to keep on grinding, no matter what the situation.

“This tournament is one of the highlights of the year for me.

“The people and golfers are real class acts; they show that disability is only a mindset,” said Roberts.

Roberts boasts a 13 handicap and has been playing golf since the age of 13.

He was born disabled due to complications at birth.

His collarbone was broken, resulting in nerve damage on his right side, which in turn affected his movement and normal functionality of his right hand.

He has about 70% normal functionality in his hand, but cannot use his wrist properly.

He will compete in the Les Autres category at the championship tournament.

Roberts first started playing golf with his friends in the park. Most of them lost interest, but he was fascinated by the technical aspect of the game.

“I collected old golf books and read them from cover to cover.

“I grew up across from a park and would regularly go and practise the tips I had read in the golf books.

“My days were spent going to school, running back home and practising golf in the park,” he recalled about those early days of his golf career.

After school, Roberts started working at a driving range in Pretoria.

“I worked in the pro shop selling buckets, but I would regularly be inspired by the golf pros. I could hit buckets for free as I was employed there. I practised from 06:00 in the morning and then did my job. After work I would practise again until 10:00 at night.”

He started playing disabled golf at the age of 19.

“Playing golf has taught me so much, especially not to be ashamed of my disability,” said Roberts.

Now 26, he works as a cricket coach at various schools in Pretoria and Centurion.

He was recently appointed as head coach at a cricket club, DACC (Differently Abled Cricket Club), which caters for disabled people playing in a normal Cricket League.

It is the first club of its kind.