

Madibaz surfers make USSA team

NMMU students Dane Cox and Dane van Greunen surfed their way into the University Sport South Africa (USSA) team after impressing in the annual championships at Victoria Bay, near George, last month.

The Billabong Madibaz team ended third in the men's event and fourth in the women's contest for a third place in the overall team standings. However, there was some joy when Van Greunen and Cox were named in the USSA men's team.

The 20-year-old Van Greunen was selected for the third straight year, which delighted the third-year marketing student.

"It was an honour to be selected for the third year running," said Van Greunen, who attended Grey Junior and Pearson High. "To be included

with some great names of the sport is always a job well done.

"The level of surfing is always high and with surfers like Shaun Joubert taking part there is no room for error."

For the 24-year-old Cox, who was educated at Port Alfred Junior School and Kingswood College in Grahamstown, his selection was confirmation that he could compete with the best of the country's surfers.

"Making the team again this year showed me I could still compete at a high level," said Cox.

"Although I was disappointed on the day with my result, I realise now that things don't always go your way and that I have much to learn about competition surfing and wave selection.

"It was my sixth USSA tournament and the

competition is always very stiff."

Van Greunen, who lives in Summerstrand, not far from Port Elizabeth's famous Pipe surfing spot, paid tribute to his parents and the varsity for their support.

"My parents have been my greatest influences and have always guided me in the right direction," he said.

"It has also been important to take part in a sport during my studies, which should be compulsory for every student.

"I'm pleased that NMMU recognises the sport of surfing as it makes me feel involved and motivated to do well in my studies."

Cox, in his final year of a BTech degree in quantity surveying, also said that his family had provided support throughout his surfing career.

He added, though, that he would like to see greater investment in the sport.

"I just want to take this opportunity to stress the need for sponsorship in the surf industry.

"Competing or qualifying for the World Tour is extremely expensive and almost impossible for many young surfers.

"Unless there is government intervention or support from the corporate world, many surfers are simply not able to pursue their dreams."

Cox said he had made many close friends during his surfing days at NMMU, who had helped him develop a competitive edge. "I believe all the competitive surfing I've done over the years has left a competitive streak in me and I aim to pursue this competitive attitude in the work place next year and in the years to come."