

Play sport or live for sport?

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At the heart of every sportsperson is a love for their craft, those who play sport are naturally competitive, determined and love winning. For those who are talented enough to become professional athletes, their sport becomes their 'thing', which becomes what they are known for, which becomes what they are associated with, which becomes what they are judged by.

Which sport do you really excel at?

It can be oh so easy to become tangled up in our performance, both negative and positive. It could be that screamer we scored, or that catch we dropped, that putt we screwed wide or that three-pointer we sunk. Sport, is a wonderful expression of ability and it creates drama that little else in the world can, but at its worst it can become one's identity, that's not me you might say, if you've ever introduced yourself by what you DO and not by who you ARE then this might be relevant to you.

How easily can you separate yourself from your sport?

I had the pleasure of interviewing Pierre Spies last week, capped 53 times by the Springboks, he is a man-mountain of a number 8 and a class Rugby pro. I asked him, as a pro at the height of his powers, did he find it hard not to get consumed with Rugby, is it hard not to just embrace 'Pierre the Rugby star'. He responded with this:

"That's where I've been quite fortunate and intentional, you have to make sure that it doesn't become your identity, even though people identify you as that. Even as a young player you start to think about when you will finish."

Spies has just recently retired from the game and is happy to hang up the boots, it's only really when you stop playing your sport that you can realise how wrapped up in it you have become, without your squad number, who are you? What am I supposed to do now?

As with all earthly things, times change and we move on, if we place our identity in the swimming pool or the football pitch, then we will be bitterly disappointed when we leave the arena. Sport is there to love and play hard, but not to become our God.

What would you do without your sport?

The Bible advises us on where we should place our sense of belonging and identity, if we want to feel fulfilment:

'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation' 2 Corinthians 5:17

Why not place your identity in something eternal and just love sport for what it is?