

Schoeman once again shows he has flair

LOCAL boy Gertjie Schoeman and former student of the Kroonstad High School has again been chosen as one of the finalists for Flare, the University of Hertfordshire's business ideas challenge for aspiring entrepreneurs. Schoeman is in his final year at the University located in Britain and is studying for a B.A. (Hons.) Marketing degree.

Winner of Flare's most innovative idea for the past two years, Schoeman's latest business idea is SG Career, a recruitment agency dedicated to helping students find a summer job in America. His business plan impressed the judges and he has gone through to the final where he will have the opportunity to pitch his idea to Julie Meyer, one of the leading champions for entrepreneurship in Europe and Dragon in BBC's online *Dragons' Den*, Martin Carr, senior financial services manager at Exemplas, and Adam Titmus, senior manager at Deloitte, one of the country's leading professional services firms.

Over 144 entries were received for Flare 2010 with an incredible 87 being shortlisted for round two. Schoeman competed against nine other finalists in round three which included presenting their ideas in an elevator-style pitch to the three judges at The Gherkin in central London.

The Flare entrepreneur of 2010 will be presented with his trophy and a bespoke prize from the overall prize



GERTJIE SCHOEMAN

fund of £25 000 which includes cash, office space in a fully-furnished incubation centre and consultancy, at an awards dinner on Friday, 7 May. The prize will provide the winner with funding and support to kick-start their business.

The University of Hertfordshire, which all finalists attend, is an ambitious, business-facing university and works tirelessly to promote entrepreneurship in all its different forms. The business ideas challenge seeks to encourage students to create unique commercial ideas and to develop business plans to lead to successful ventures.

Nigel Culkin, who is the director of the Centre for Inno-

vation and Enterprise at the University of Hertfordshire, says: "Our aim is to encourage entrepreneurship as a means of stimulating innovation and enterprise across the university. Flare was launched in 2004 to provide students, staff and alumni with an opportunity to develop and test their idea and to get a taste of the life-world of an entrepreneur. We're delighted that the number of entries has risen this year; this demonstrates how good ideas often flourish in periods of economic instability. Schoeman has shown great entrepreneurial spirit to make it through to this stage. At time of going to press, the results of the winners were not known. Watch this space!"