

Op brings hope for athletes with knee injuries

DOMINIQUE HERMAN

ATHLETES who suffered career-ending knee injuries will now be able to play sport again with a new operation that a Cape Town knee surgeon learnt while on a trip to Belgium.

Oekie van Zyl is the first surgeon in Cape Town to perform the operation. The tearing of the meniscus, the car-

tilage between the femur and tibia, is the most common knee injury, he said.

By inserting a meniscus from a tissue bank in Pretoria via key-hole surgery, the patient is able to go back to sport three months later, after six weeks on crutches.

The success rate of the one-hour or longer procedure was "quite high", according to Van Zyl.