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STRAIGHT FROM AFRICA



SPORTS & PROPERTIES INC.

Hill Carrow, second from right, is helping to raise the profile of sports in Lesotho.

Triangle leader using sports to elevate a region in Africa

A Raleigh company led by a sports entrepreneur who brought the 1987 U.S. Olympic Festival to the Triangle is now helping a small country in Africa host similar events.

Hill Carrow, the CEO of **Sports & Properties Inc.**, is helping Lesotho stage the 2020 Southern Africa Youth Games and then the 2022 Africa Youth Games.

Lesotho is a country of roughly 3 million people that is landlocked and entirely surrounded by South Africa. This year's event will include 10 countries and 11 sports in a run-up for the larger event in 2022, which is scheduled to include 54 countries and 18 events.

Carrow says Lesotho is "very challenged in terms of resources," but the U.S. Olympic Committee has reached out to help countries like it build up

sports programs. He worked on a similar effort earlier in Botswana.

Back in 1987, the Olympic Festival was an epic event in a market just entering the national stage, and the flowers planted along the freeways are a reminder of the innovations of that time.

Carrow says the two events ahead in Lesotho can also help highlight that country.

"These events can help announce to the region or the continent, 'We are somebody you should know, we are up and coming, we are trying to put ourselves on a larger stage,'" he says. "So there are a lot of eyes on it.

"That's huge. That's one of the things we keep emphasizing to them, how big a deal this is going to be for them."