

A bride and groom are shown in a romantic embrace, kissing. The groom is on the left, wearing a dark suit, and the bride is on the right, wearing a white, off-the-shoulder wedding dress. They are standing in a wooded area with several trees and green foliage. The lighting is soft and warm, suggesting late afternoon or early evening. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

A Groom's Perspective

Jaque & Kelly Fourie — 30th May 2009

An interview with Jaque Fourie
—Matthew Stubbs



“I got to know Jaque and Kelly fairly well as they planned their wedding at Oakfield.

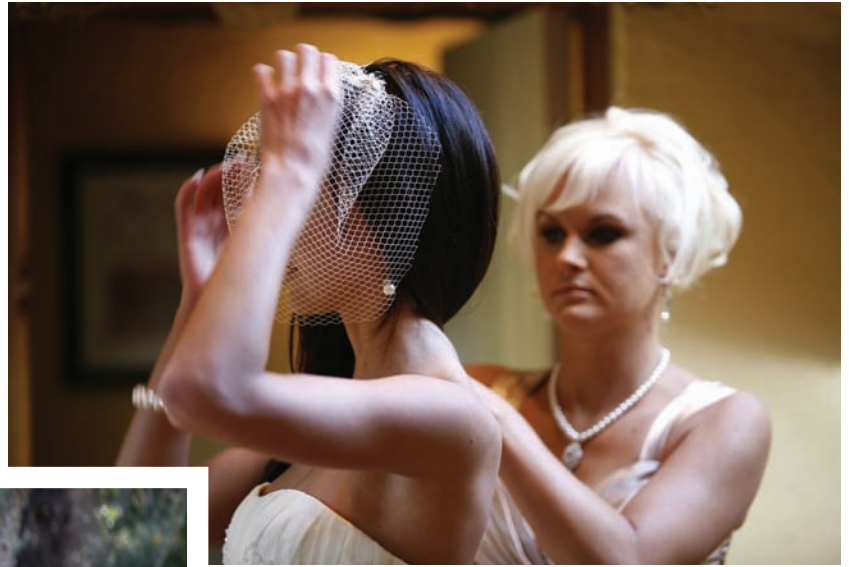
Jaque met Kelly two years before they married. Their first date was only a year later as they were both involved in longstanding relationships of many years. At the first date Jaque told Kelly that he could imagine being married to her. She said that her feelings were the same. Strangely they must have known each other longer than they realised, as they not only lived in the same street, four houses apart, but also attended the same church with Kelly's dad even teaching Jaque's brother and sisters at Sunday School. They enjoyed a wonderful winter wedding in The Homestead on 30th May 2009.

As I wanted to get the man's perspective on the wedding I met with Jaque five months after the wedding. We spent a long time

chatting. As I began to understand the demands that professional sportsmen face in trying to build and maintain a normal marriage I realised that Jaque had much more to tell others than just the wedding day.

I am indebted to Jaque who was so open in sharing something so personal. In these times when almost 50% of marriages fail, it was truly refreshing to meet a young couple who have such a mature and proactive approach to something as life changing as marriage.

Photographer
Michelle Loukidis



MS: With the planning of your wedding you seemed to get really involved.

JF: Yes I thought it was important to support my wife. Kelly wanted an antique and elegant wedding. I like to think of myself as just an ordinary person. We are not flashy people so we wanted somewhere homely and private. Many of my friends are under the public eye 24 hours a day, so a wedding where we could all take off our ties, dance a little—be ourselves for just one day was important. Oakfield was the first and only venue we visited. We booked the 28 March but had to move the date twice for the Super 14. Kelly did all the décor but I helped a lot in the last two weeks.

MS: How did you find the time to be involved?

JF: It was difficult—and I am away 8 months of the year and even when I am home, we only have Wednesdays and Sundays off. We went to dancing lessons—mostly late at night—I am not a dancer but it was really fun. We also travelled to Welkom to meet our minister who was Kelly's pastor as a child. We attended the service and then spent the whole day with him. I was really pleased when he told us he thought we were ready for marriage.

MS: How did you sort out your guest list?

JF: I just wanted to invite family and friends with whom we have a personal relationship. Our parents gave us a list of their friends and we then added our friends. We didn't invite young kids—I have been to weddings that they have disrupted – running everywhere—I think this upset a few people and my Mom, but I told her that this was our wedding. Every guest invited really wanted to share the ceremony with us. Due to the Bulls playing in the Currie Cup Final, only 4 couples were unable to come.

MS: You also came to our Oakfield Marriage Workshop. Only 10% of the couples that we invite attend. What made you choose to come?

JF: Kelly's mom encouraged us, especially since our Pastor was in Welkom—it was an awesome evening—so much fun. We would like to fit in as many as we can in the future—once a year at least.

MS: Your perspective on the big day—were you nervous?

JF: The week of the wedding is so exciting as all the details come together. We came to Oakfield for the final appointment—You guys were amazing because we didn't know where to begin or what to do. My brother was MC—he was just the right person he went to a lot of trouble. I was really looking forward to the wedding. The night before is quite a strange time—all the girls spent the night at Kelly's mom's home, whilst my three best men joined me at home for a braai—no drinking and early to bed.

MS: What about the wedding day itself?

JF: The wedding is not a small thing. When I was standing there waiting for my wife to come in I was more nervous than playing front of 80 000 people. I was shaking—it was very emotional.

MS: About married life—what are your feelings?

JF: We feel that our marriage is God's plan. I made my marriage vows before God—he knows what I am thinking all the time. I believe that marriage is forever so I take it seriously.



Being in love enough to marry is only the beginning. This is not enough. The man has the responsibility to keep the family together. You start with love and then you have to build the marriage. We are still in the early stages of our marriage—a time of getting to know each other, “tande skeur” as my friend says. You also have to build a relationship where you can be yourself. My previous relationship was not honest. When I met Kelly I promised never to lie. Kelly is very honest and open so this has helped me to be myself and build a relationship of trust. With my lifestyle, girls throw themselves at us all the time. I just say I’m married and I love my wife —You have to earn trust and you need to give trust too.

Marriage is a building process that must happen in the first years. We are working hard. At the Oakfield Marriage Workshop, we sat with a wonderful elderly couple whose company we really enjoyed. They gave us a list of books on marriage which have been awesome. While on my last tour I took *The Power of the Praying Man* with me to read. This was recommended by Dr Anthony who conducts the workshops. Kelly had *The Power of the Praying Women*. We both read a little every day so the time I returned home, we had finished the books.

When you marry you also need to make new goals together. At first my rugby was everything. I still love rugby, but now my priority is to build a future for my family—this is something I am looking forward to.

We have had our problems, “sitting vas” on issues and struggling a bit because it is not easy. Each time I returned from tour, we had to adjust to being with each other again. Little things need to be solved—after a tour I want to stay at home, but because Kelly has been alone at home all this time, she needs to get out. It is not only the wife that should be expected to make all the adjustments to being married. As part of a team, we are expected to socialise together and this is not always in the best interests



of your marriage. Helped by some excellent role models on our team, I have also made some big changes in my life.

We are also lucky to have an awesome family relationship. Before I proposed, I invited both families for a braai, and we immediately bonded. This has become very important for both of us when I am not home. Kelly worked hard to involve herself in my family and has become close to my mom.

MS: Advice on the wedding day?

JF: It is a stressful day. I had goose bumps the whole day —when she came into the church, I was close to tears. But it is strange because you only really get to be alone with your new wife when the wedding ends. The wedding was amazing for me and my wife. But don’t let yourself get stressed.

MJ: Any last thing you wish to add?

JF: Get the book—it deals with everything and helps you to understand your wife her needs and emotions—there was so much I did not know. You can’t just get married and expect to find happiness— everyone will need to get help at some point. If you are not willing to learn you can lose your marriage before you even understand each other or find out what you need from each other.



SUPPLIERS

- DJ**
Shattered Glass
- Décor & Flowers**
Café Fleur
- Draping**
Cor de Rosa
- Videographer**
Anita Hayden
– Vivid Editing
- Hair**
Hair Crew
- Make-Up**
Glamour Mechanics
- Co-ordinator**
Alet Wessels
- Cake**
Alberto’s Cakes
- Minister**
Pierre du Plooy