



Manyonga aims for 9m record

The only two major milestones left in international men's athletics are possibly running a sub two-hour marathon and jumping further than nine metres.

Watch this space as they say. Luvo Manyonga has done in the last four weeks what no other long jumper could do since 2009. That is to jump further than 8.60m.

He is done so on two occasions. The past weekend at the South African Championships in Potchefstroom he jumped 8.65m to set a new national and African record. At the Gauteng North Championships he jumped 8.62m. According to Lee-Roy Newton (his agent) the Tuks athlete has not even come close to fulfilling his true potential. The question is no longer whether Manyonga can jump 9m, but it is when he will do so.

Newton's confidence stems from drawing comparison between the world record-holder, Mike Powell's (USA), magical world breaking year and what Manyonga has achieved so far this season.

"In 1991 when Powell jumped 8.95 me-

tres to set a new world record at the Tokyo World Championships he started his season by jumping 8.33 metres in May. He then averaged distances of 8.40 metres leading up to the World Championships," explained Newton. "Luvo started his season with a jump of 8.40 metres followed by a jump of 8.62 metres and now at the national championships he jumped 8.65 metres. So, it is clear at this stage that he is ticking all the right 'boxes' to jump close to nine metres. I can confidently say he is capable of even going past nine metres," Newton continued.

Manyonga is quite confident in his capabilities and believes that he has what it takes to jump further than nine metres.

"You can say it is my calling to jump nine metres but I never focus on a specific distance when I compete. The only thing that matters is to ensure that I master all the small aspects in my technique. If I do that I know that the big jump will happen," said Manyonga.

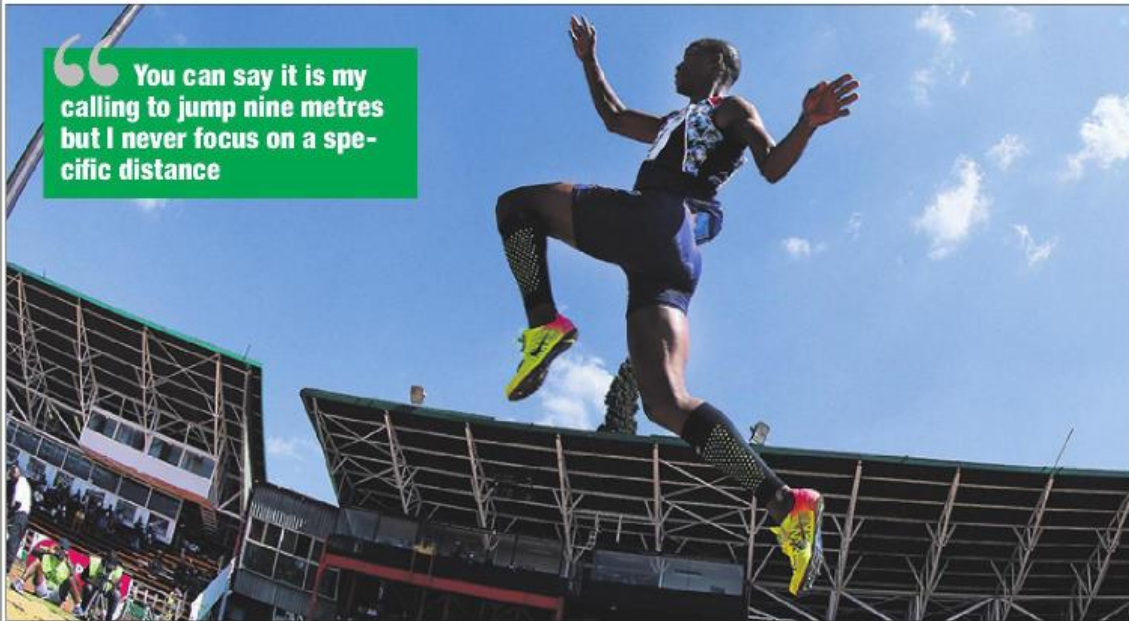
Wayne Coldman, the HPC Condition-

ing Coach, said the distance Manyonga has jumped so far is due to pure talent.

"We have not started with the next level of training which focuses on what is needed for him to be really competitive. To be honest, I would say we have done 56% of the training he needs to do before the World Championships," explained Coldman.

Manyonga's coach, Neil Cornelius, agrees.

"It is important for us not to get obsessed about the distance. Last year we made that mistake. We wanted to go big every time he competed. That led to him 'bombing' out at last year's national championship. The past weekend at the South African championship we only had one goal and that was to win gold. Luvo had to make sure that his first jump counted. We believe that with a good first attempt you 'buy' five more jumps. There are still a few small little things in Luvo's technique which we need to work on before he moves to the next level," Cornelius explained.



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Luvo Manyonga jumped 8.65 metres to set a new national and African record the past weekend at the South African Championships in Potchefstroom.

Photo: Roger Sedres/ImageSA

