



Three high school athletes beating the world

Koos Venter

Two world champions and two world record holders.

There are not many high schools in the world that can boast with such an achievement. TuksSport High School can.

The IAAF Youth World Championships in Nairobi was a definite highlight for South



Tshenolo Lema. Photo: Zander Erasmus

African athletics with the athletes winning 11 medals (five gold, three silver and three bronze).

Sokwakhana Zazini who won the 400m-hurdles and Tshenolo Lema winner of the 100m and silver medallist in the 200m were two of the TuksSport High School stars.

Zazini and Clarence Munyai hold the distinction of being the only two South African athletes who can claim to have done what the legendary Wayde van Niekerk had achieved – to run world records this season.

The 17-year-old Zazini set a new world youth record in the 400m-hurdles, running 48.84s at the Gauteng North Championships at Tuks.

His time is 0.17s faster than the time ran by William Wynne (USA) in 2007. The American clocked 49.01s.

Munyai, along with Van Niekerk, made athletics history at the Golden Spike Meeting in Ostrava by becoming the first athletes of the same country to set new world bests in different categories but in the same race.

Van Niekerk "blitzed" to victory over the rarely-run 300m distance in a time of 30.81s that took down Michael Johnson's world best of 30.85 which had stood since 2000.

Isaac Makwala of Botswana was second

in 31.44s with Munyai third in 31.61s. The TuksSport High School grade 12-learner's time is the fastest ever by a junior athlete.

The previous world best time over 300 metres held by Mark Richardson who clocked 32.53s in 1991.

The performances of these four athletes prove that the Tuks Athletics Academy is succeeding in its mission statement to become one of the world's leading High Performance Centres in athletics through individual development and educational programmes.

Zazini and Munyai credits Hennie Kriel, head coach at Tuks/HPC, as the common denominator in their success.

They said he made them believe in their abilities, and they are full of praise as to how he is constantly able to motivate them to push their boundaries.

Kriel's was hesitant to claim any of his athlete's success as his own, saying he was only trying to guide them.

"After all is said and done, everything boils down to how hungry they are to make their dreams become a reality," Kriel said this week.



Sokwakhana Zazini. Photo: Reg Caldecott

