

Modern coaching for Manyonga!

By CHARLES BALOVI

LUVU Manyonga's coach Neil Cornelius has had to resort to unorthodox coaching methods! Call it bizarre but it seems to be working for him and his star athlete.

The Olympic silver medallist and world long jump champion left his training base, the University of Pretoria's High Performance Centre, last year to move to Port Elizabeth. But his coach Cornelius stayed behind.

Since the beginning of the year, Cornelius has travelled to the Windy City just once for a coaching session with his top athlete. The rest of the time he coaches Luvo via WhatsApp and video calls.

Manyonga is currently in France to take part in an indoor event this week.

The lanky jumper will then join Team SA at the World Indoor

Championships in Birmingham, England, from 1-4 March. Fellow long jumpers Zarek Visser, former African champion, and World Championships bronze medallist Rushwal Samaai will also be in the sandpit in Birmingham.

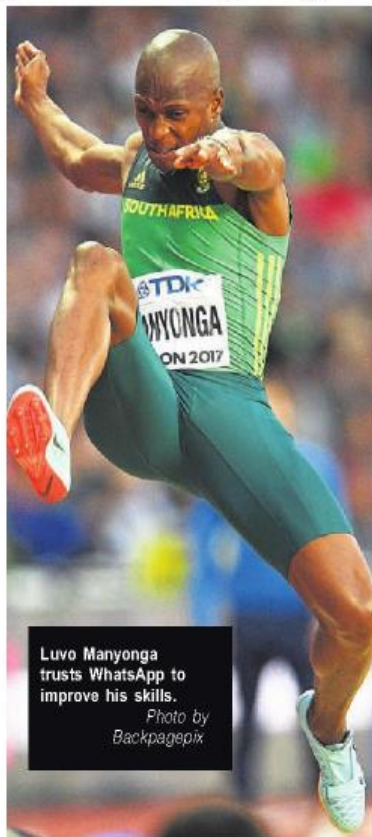
Manyonga has also been included in SA's Commonwealth Games team taking part in the event in Gold Coast, Australia, in April.

Said Cornelius: "It may sound bizarre, but I use WhatsApp and video calls to coach him. I had sessions with him on this platform just before he left for France and he is in good condition, I must say. It's a modern way of coaching – I can't fly to Port Elizabeth every week.

"Luvo knows what he has to do. I set out guidelines for him to follow in training. He is in good shape and ready to take on the world again. Everything is going well."

When asked to elaborate further on his unique coaching methods, Cornelius said so far they were yielding results and he had no complaints.

"WhatsApp, video calling – it's the way to go. We are trying new things.



Luvo Manyonga trusts WhatsApp to improve his skills.

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Everything is on track and there is nothing to be worried about."

Manyonga, who won the SA Sports Star of the Year award last year, is expected to make a clean sweep in all competitions this year.

Cornelius said they're not obsessed with breaking records, though: "We are not worried about the distance. He will deliver medal performances. He has a jam-packed schedule and we just need to manage that."