

## Fit-again Jobodwana to headline Grand Prix event

THE first man to break 20 sec in the 200 m in South Africa, Anaso Jobodwana (**pictured**) will be the headline act at the first Athletix Grand Prix Meeting that will take place at Ruimsig Stadium, Johannesburg, on March 1.

Jobodwana ran 19,87 sec on his way to a World Championship bronze medal in 2015, in what was then an SA record. The 200 m has always been Jobodwana's favourite race, even though he has had success in the 100 m when he won the World University Games title in both events (100 m and 200 m) in 2013.

He has unfinished business with the 100 m and wants to break the magical 10-sec barrier—a feat that is easily within his reach given his 200 m time.

"I know that when I break the 10-sec mark, I will easily be able to beat my 200 m best and reclaim the national record (19,84 sec held by Wayde van Niekerk). Running the 200 m at the first Athletix Grand Prix Meeting fits in perfectly with my plans to get back into the



shape where I am running fast again and feel comfortable doing it," said Jobodwana. "I'm excited about running in Ruimsig. It will be good to race again and I am looking forward to seeing who will line up with me."

One of the athletes lining up alongside him will be next generation sprinter Retshiditswe Mlenga. It seems strange that one would speak of the next generation of sprinters in the same sentence as the likes of Anaso Jobodwana as he is only 25 years old, yet such is the depth now in South African sprinting that it is impossible to not do so.

Mlenga became the toast of the town after winning the 200 m world title and the silver medal in the 100 m at the IAAF World Youth Championships in Nairobi in 2017. His performances will see him mix it with the big guns. This can only be of benefit to the 17-year-old.

"Kenya was a big experience for me. Winning that title has given me so much more confidence. Now I am invited to

run against the likes of Anaso [Jobodwana] whom I have looked up to for many years. It feels like I have moved onto another level," said Mlenga.

Jobodwana has had bad luck with injuries since his World Championship bronze medal. He is looking forward to running injury-free in 2018. With the CAA Senior African Championships taking place in August in Asaba (Nigeria), Jobodwana is looking forward to having a good build-up to the Championship. The Athletix Grand Prix Meeting fits in perfectly with his plans.

"Running injury-free is an amazing feeling. Now I have the time to perfect my technique and at the same time run some really good competitive races. The Athletix Grand Prix Meeting on 1 March is perfect for me in terms of timing."

— SuperSport.

### ATHLETIX GRAND PRIX SERIES SCHEDULE:

**March 1:** Ruimsig Stadium, Johannesburg

**March 8:** Tuks Stadium, Tshwane

**March 22:** Dal Josaphat Stadium, Paarl