



HISTORIC. Clarence Munyai celebrates after setting a new South African 200m record of 19.69 seconds in the SA Athletics Championships at Tuks Athletics Stadium in Pretoria yesterday. Picture: Gallo Images

# Not Wayde's world now

## MUNYAI: 20-YEAR-OLD SHATTERS VAN NIEKERK'S SA RECORD IN PRETORIA

➔ **His coach Hennie Kriel was stunned by the achievement.**

**Wesley Botton**

**H**aving shocked everyone in the global athletics fraternity, including himself, Clarence Munyai admits he'll need to find a way to handle the increased pressure he faces ahead of the international season.

The 20-year-old athlete eclipsed the national 200m record yesterday, blitzing across the line in 19.69 in his semifinal on

day two of the SA Athletics Championships in Pretoria.

He obliterated his personal best by 0.41 and ripped 0.15 off the previous national mark held by 400m world record holder Wayde van Niekerk.

"I thought I had 19.8 in my legs, so that's what I thought I was going to run today," Munyai said.

"When I saw 19.7 (unofficial time on the stadium clock) I was like 'eish', I wasn't expecting that, so I'm happy."

Rocketing up the world rankings, he climbed to 10th in the all-time list, just 0.01 outside the African record held by retired Namibian legend Frank Fredericks.

"It does put me under pressure because now people overseas can see I can run 19.6, and they'll be

expecting those sort of times that side as well," said Munyai, who set a national junior record of 20.10 last year.

"So I need to step up my game and hopefully I can run the same sort of times I ran today."

His coach, Hennie Kriel, seemed to be as stunned by the youngster's time as anyone else.

He felt Munyai was one of the best bend runners in the world, however, and the sky was the limit if he could maintain his composure under pressure in the upcoming international campaign.

"For South African sprinting, this is fantastic, and it shows you his potential," Kriel said.

"Clarence tends to be a bit of an up-and-down person, but he can put it together. The challenge

now will be for him to stay in that zone."

In other disciplines yesterday, former champion Simon Magakwe reclaimed the SA 100m title in 10.07, in the absence of the country's big guns, and Carina Horn clocked 11.08 to take gold in the women's short dash, just 0.05 outside the national record she set the day before.

Caster Semenya crossed the line in 1:58.92 in a solo first-round 800m effort, coasting into tonight's final, and she went on to win the 1 500m final later in the evening in 4:10.68.

In the men's hammer throw, Chris Harmse launched a 70.62m heave, with the 44-year-old athlete lifting the national crown for the 23rd year in succession.

