



GOLDEN GIRL: Caster Semenya competes in the women 1500m during the SA Champs at Tuks Stadium. PICTURE: BACKPAGEPIX

## Tuks track to attract the best

OCCERT DE VILLIERS  
Tuks Stadium

DO NOT be surprised if the world's fastest men and women start flocking to Pretoria to race on the hot Tuks Stadium track. The surface has produced four national sprinting records so far at the South African Track and Field Championships at the University of Pretoria venue.

Once the African sun has baked the blue two-tone track, athletes glide rather than run over the Mondo surface.

On Friday night it produced one of the greatest performances on South African soil when Clarence Munyai posted a new national record of 19.69 seconds in the men's 200 metres.

The 20-year-old Munyai took a massive 0.15-second chunk off the previous mark world 400m record holder Wayne van Niekerk posted in Jamaica in June 2016.

"I knew the conditions were going to be good and I saw from yesterday the people are running really fast times," Munyai said.

"I'm just 20 and I mean, a 19.69 is a massive achievement and I never thought I was going to run that quick at this age.

"I almost did a full victory lap."

He slashed almost half-a-second off his previous best — the South African junior record of 20.10sec — he set a year ago at the same venue.

Munyai was a no-show in the final yesterday with Luxolo Adams earning his first national title with a new personal best of 20.08 seconds.

He slashed a massive 0.37sec off his previous best, with junior sensation Thando Dlodlo winning his second senior individual medal with a time of 20.41.

Dlodlo set a new South African junior record of 10.11sec in the 100

metres on Thursday before winning silver in the men's 100m final with a time of 10.15.

He finished second behind Simon Magakwe, who made a comeback of note when he won a record seventh South African 100m title.

It is the first time since Magakwe had served a two-year ban for a doping violation that he has stepped onto the podium at the national championships.

"It feels good to be back. I was away struggling, but going to Cape Town was a good change for me," Magakwe said.

Former South African record holder Henricho Bruintjies had to be content with the bronze medal after finishing 0.01sec behind Dlodlo.

The championships also saw South Africa's fastest woman Carina Horn break the 28-year-old 100m record with a time of 11.03 on Thursday.

"It is a great feeling,

I am really excited, I've been waiting for a few years to race on my home track and I am glad I could do it here," Horn said.

"I can get to sub-11 because that is my goal, I feel it is coming now that I have the record."

Yesterday saw another long-time record being shattered with World Youth champion Zeney van der Walt smashing the 35-year-old junior women's 400m hurdles record held by Myrtle Bothma.

She pushed Olympian Wenda Nel all the way to the line, finishing second behind her in a time of 55.01sec.

Nel claimed the title with a time of 55.05. "I ran my own race and focused on my own 10 hurdles... the last hurdle could have been better but I am happy," Van der Walt said.

"It gives me a lot of confidence and now I know I can reach the 55 seconds."

