



Magakwe pleased with comeback

Almost forgotten sprinter Simon Magakwe believes a change of scenery was what he needed in his bid for a second coming.

Magakwe, who turns 32 in May, relocated to the University of Western Cape in January for a "fresh start" where he has linked up with new coach Paul Gorries.

"I missed sports. I missed winning," he said after clinching a low-key 100m final in the first leg of the Liquid Telecom Athletix Grand Prix on Thursday.

"I only started training in January, so I want to take races as they come and maybe I'll surprise myself at Tuks [on Thursday]," he said.

Magakwe is recovering from a wasted two years after he was found guilty of violating an Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) rule for allegedly refusing to provide a urine sample in an out-of-competition test in December 2014.

The lad from Itsoseng near Mahikeng, North West, credited Ntate Molapo, a Joburg-based businessman, for being there when he was down and out.

"When we talk survival, Ntate Molapo paid for accommodation, food and almost everything for me. Some of my friends, family and supporters also gave me hope," said Magakwe, who used to rent a backroom in Phokeng when he was still based in Rustenburg.

At his prime he had a training spell with Usain Bolt in Jamaica in 2008 and regularly made appearances in the lucrative Diamond League meetings.

He used to make more than R200 000 in a good season.

Magakwe insisted he was encouraged by old-timers like Justin Gatlin to continue racing.

The former SA 100m record holder said it was encouraging to see young sprinters coming through. He last raced at last year's SA Senior Championships. - Daniel Mothowagae

