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# How the 10-second 100m fell

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**O**ver the past fortnight, South Africa's top sprinters have turned the air on social media rather blue with "insults" as the #FillUpPotch movement gathers momentum.

The hashtag is a banter-fuelled publicity play by the speedsters – led by 400m world record holder Wayde van Niekerk and South Africa record holder and Olympic finalist Akani Simbine – aimed at filling up McArthur Athletics Stadium for the SA Senior Championships in Potchefstroom in anticipation of the fastest 100m race to be run in this country.

With four of the sprinters who should make the 100m final on April 21 and 22 each having covered the distance in less than 10 seconds this season, with outlandish sprinting feats becoming a weekly thing.

Since the athletics season began, Simbine has run three sub-10s and his first sub-20 200m – the first on our soil – while 21-year-old Roto became the fifth South African to run a sub-10 100m.

## Banter and publicity as SA's fastest athletes speed up to #FillUpPotch

Leotlela and Munyai, says you can't pinpoint one thing: "There's probably more than one reason; it's a collection of things. The potential has always been there, but once [Simon] Magakwe became the first South African to do a sub-10, it shook us and showed us what is possible. Once it happened, barriers were broken."

Barriers haven't so much been broken as smashed this season, with outlandish sprinting feats becoming a weekly thing.

The juniors have also come on strong, with Leotlela revisiting Simbine's South African junior record to 10.12 seconds, while training partner Munyai beat Riaan Dempers' 22-year South African junior record of 10.12 seconds with his 10.11

seconds – second only to Simbine's sub-20 200m.

Sokwakhana Zazini (17), who is also trained by Kriel, posted a world Under-18 record of 48.84 seconds in the 400m hurdles.

Former South African sprinter Mathew Quinn agrees with Kriel's theory of Magakwe being the tipping point, but heaps credit on three other local athletes. "What [Usain] Bolt did for world athletics, Wayde, Akani and Anaso have done for South African sprinting.

"In my time, running a sub-10 was tough. Now, if you don't do it, you're no one," says Quinn, whose personal best was 10.08 seconds.

Sports scientist Ross Tucker is more interested in how the structures at Tuks University in Pretoria, where all the sprinters but Van Niekerk and Jobodwana come from, work.

"What you've got there is the creation of an organic performance hub, where one or two athletes

they're also going to be successful," he says.

"Maybe Tuks is succeeding because it has managed to attract good athletes because someone from there made it. They also train around each other, so they've got a team environment in an individual sport. If ever you wanted to build a high-performance centre, what they're doing at Tuks is how you'd go about it – they're incentivised and work with one another, and they've got belief and good systems behind them."

Tucker also gave credit to coaches and sports science. "Tuks has elevated standards and the coaches are learning from the athletes they're producing, and they have a formula on how to develop athletes. So the coaching and the scientific support is responsible for some of the success."

Kriel's example is a case in point of how seriously the coaches take their work at Tuks.

"I made a decision to quit my corporate job two to three years ago to coach full time at the highest level," he says. "My question was how I expected athletes to be professionals if I was a part-time coach."

What about Van Niekerk and Jobodwana, who are not Tuks products?

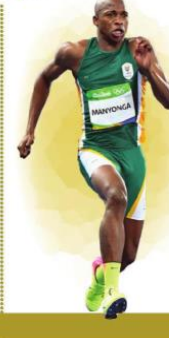
"Geographically, they may be separate, but they're part of the same culture," says Tucker. "Anaso winning world championship bronze and Wayde breaking the 400m world record inspires others to want to be

## SA's young champs



**Akani Simbine**

Age: 23  
 Event: 100m  
 Time: 9.92sec  
 PB: 9.89sec  
 Venue: Tuks, Pretoria



SA AND AFRICA RECORD  
**Luvu Manyonga**

Event: Long jump  
 Distance: 8.62m  
 PB: 8.62m  
 Venue: Tuks, Pretoria



JUNIOR WORLD RECORD (UNDER-18)  
**Sokwakhana Zazini**

Age: 17  
 Event: 400m hurdles  
 Time: 48.84sec  
 PB: 48.84sec  
 Venue: Tuks, Pretoria



SA RECORD

**Letitia Janse van Vuuren**  
 Age: 20  
 Event: Hammer throw  
 Distance: 63.82m  
 PB: 63.82m  
 Venue: Sasolburg



JUNIOR SA RECORD

**Gift Leotlela**  
 Age: 18  
 Event: 100m  
 Time: 10.12sec  
 PB: 10.12sec  
 Venue: Tuks, Pretoria



JUNIOR SA RECORD

**Clarence Munyai**  
 Age: 19  
 Event: 200m  
 Time: 20.10sec  
 PB: 20.10sec  
 Venue: Tuks, Pretoria

