

# Games fire up Tuks badminton ace

## ANA REPORTER

UNIVERSITY of Pretoria (Tuks) badminton player Bongani van Bodenstien is determined to do well when he competes at the University Sports South Africa (USSA) Tournament in Durban after learning some lessons at the Commonwealth Games.

He realises success and sacrifices go hand in hand. The goal he has set himself is that if he gets to represent South Africa at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, he's not going to be just another name in the draw.

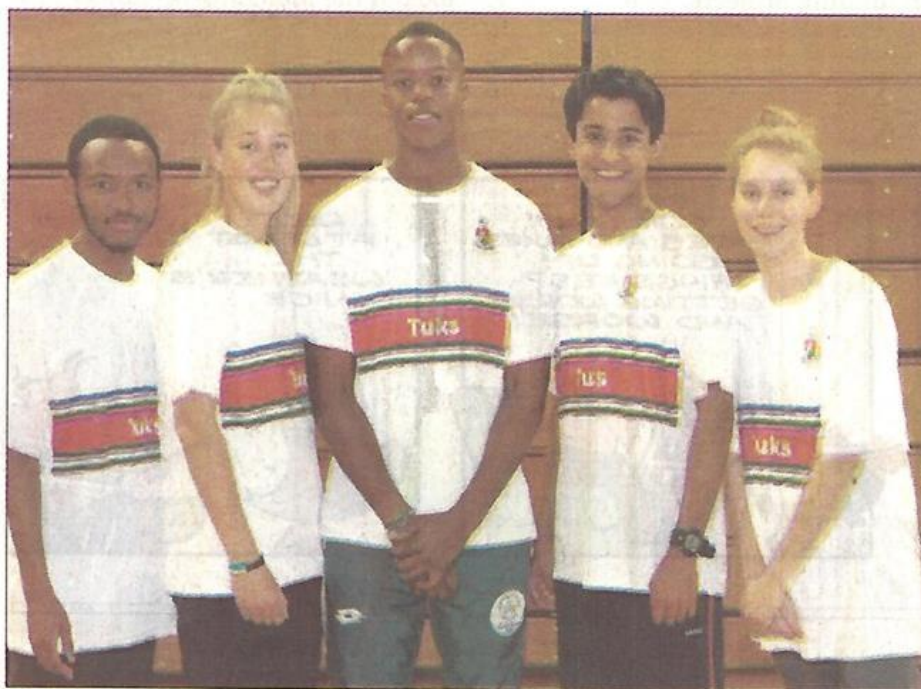
"Getting to go to the Commonwealth Games in Australia was, without doubt, the best thing that could have happened to me.

"In the past, I have represented South Africa at the World Junior Championships and World Student Games. But the big difference this time around was that I got to stay in an athletes' village and got to rub shoulders with some of the world's best players.

"It was sitting down and talking with some players from Australia and England who changed my perception about being a badminton player.

"One player said to me that his impression was that South African players don't believe they're good enough to compete internationally.

"We are getting intimidated too easily. According to him it is wrong, because we train just as hard as they



The Tuks badminton team (Bongani van Bodenstien centre) is getting ready for the USSA Tournament in Durban. PICTURE: AFRICAN NEWS AGENCY (ANA)

do. The big difference is when they get to play, they do so to win.

"I had to admit he was right. In the past when I walked on to the court during an international tournament, the last thing I thought about was winning.

"My only goal was to try to at least win 10 points and put up a good showing. When I think back to it now, I realise it was a somewhat childish approach.

"It was suggested to me that I should start to keep a diary in which I wrote down my goals, small and

long-term, and then tick them off on a daily basis to get disciplined. I started doing so, and it is motivating me.

"My whole approach to training has also changed. For the first time, I'm up at 5am sprinting on the athletics track.

"I'm also training to a specific programme in the gym and on the court," said the Tuks player, who during the previous two USSA tournaments won the singles, doubles and mixed doubles titles. – African News Agency (ANA)