



Pretorian makes SA athletics history at Gold Coast games

Wenda Nel not only redeemed herself by winning a bronze medal in the 400m hurdles at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, she also made South African athletics history.

The Pretorian is the first South African female athlete ever to win a medal in the longer hurdles event at a major international competition (Olympic Games, World Championships and Commonwealth Games).

It meant she had just reason for smiling broadly the moment her name flashed on the electronic scoreboard, confirming her third-place finish.

What made the moment that little bit more special was that during the 2014 Commonwealth Games, Nel was disqualified in the final for a trailing leg infringement.

Janieve Russell (Jamaica) on Thursday won in a time of 54.33s, with Eilidh Doyle (Scotland) second in 54.80s.

It was the third time the Scot finished second in the 400m hurdles at the Commonwealth Games.

Nel clocked a time of 54.96s.

She admitted that she had her work cut out to secure a medal place finish.

"Going over the last hurdle, it felt for a moment as if I was going to crash down. Luckily I managed to recover.

"Over the last 50 metres, it was a case of running like never before. I was not immediately sure if I had done enough to medal," said an emotional Nel afterwards.

"The moment I realised that I had done enough to be on the podium is one I will cherish for a long time to come."

The Tuks-athlete surprised with her aggressive approach.

She was basically racing from the front the moment she got out of the starting blocks.

"The plan was to go out hard as I wanted to push my body to see what I am capable of," Nel concluded.

"At the end of the day, it was perhaps not my most perfect race, but I guess it does not matter; I had achieved what I set out to do."



Wenda Nel smiling after she realised she had won the bronze medal in the 400m hurdles at the Commonwealth Games.

Photo: Twitter.