



Club deems Semenya the best athlete in her class this century

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Multiple Olympic and world champion Caster Semenya was named Tuks Athletics's Female Athlete of the Century at the club's centenary celebration in Pretoria on Wednesday night.

LJ van Zyl, the first SA competitor to win two medals at a single world championship, was handed the title of Male Athlete of the Century. Sprinters Akani Simbine and

Carina Horn won the Male and Female athletes of the year awards. Simbine won the Commonwealth Games and African 100m crowns, while Horn became the first SA woman to break the 11-second barrier.

Middle-distance star Semenya is SA's most prolific medal-winner in athletics, having won Olympic 800m gold in 2012 and 2016, and world championship 800m gold in 2009, 2011 and 2017.



AHEAD OF THE PACK: Caster Semenya is Tuks athlete of the century. PICTURE: WESSEL OOSTHUIZEN/GALLO IMAGES

She also won a world championship bronze in the 1,500m in 2017.

Semenya, the Diamond League 800m champion in 2018 and 2017, also took the Commonwealth Games 800m and 1,500m double in Australia this year and the 400m and 800m crowns at the African championships in Nigeria.

Semenya, who also owns the SA records from 400m to 1,500m, was without peer.

Van Zyl, however, beat off stiff competition for his award, being picked above the likes of Jacques Freitag, the former high-jump world champion and even reigning long-jumper Luvo Manyonga, who left the club at the end of last year.

Van Zyl was the first South African to pick up two medals at a single world championships, taking bronze in the 400m hurdles at Daegu 2011 and then silver in the 4x400m relay.

11

Seconds Horn took to become first SA woman to break the 100m barrier

The Commonwealth Games champion in 2006, Van Zyl's best finish at an Olympics was fifth at Beijing 2008.

He broke Llewellyn Herbert's SA record, twice going 47.66sec, a mark that still stands.

Herbert, an Olympic bronze medalist at Sydney 2000 and a world championship silver medalist in 1997, was also at the function.

Van Zyl also won the world U20 400m hurdles title in

2002.

Other award winners were: Centenary Honourable Recognition Award – June Mackenzie

Most promising Male Athlete of the Year Award – Thembo Monareng

Most Promising Female Athlete of the Year Award – Prudence Sekgodisa

Junior Male Athlete of the Year Award – Sekwakana Zazini

Junior Female Athlete of the Year Award – Yvonne Robson. — DDC

