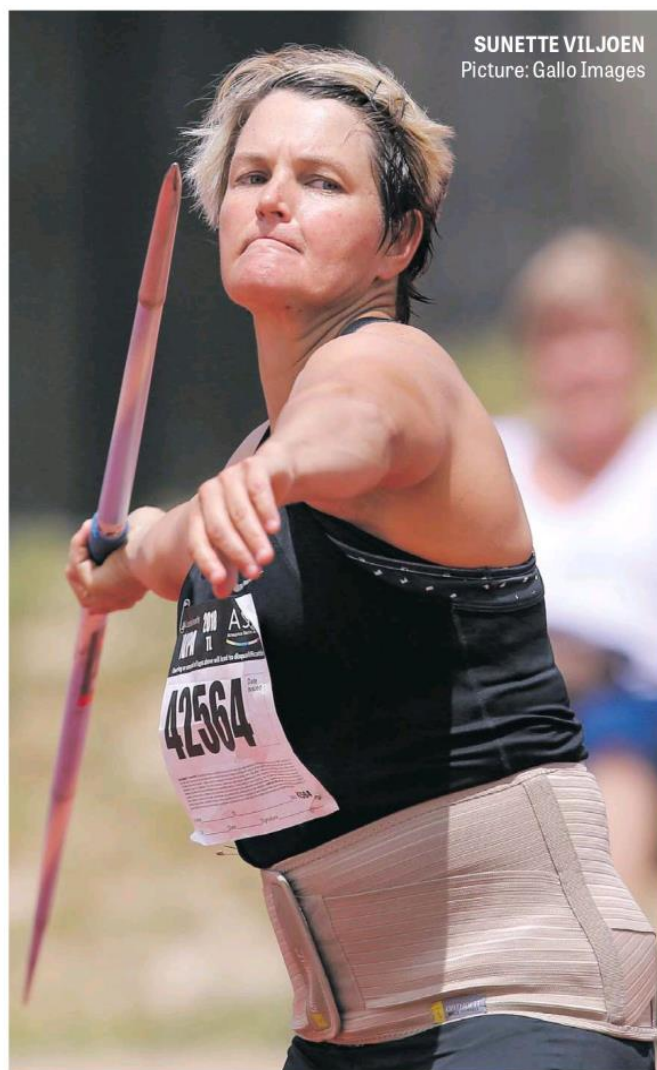




Veteran Viljoen eyes world No 1

AMBITIOUS: SA STAR ALSO WANTS SPOTAKOVA RECORD

➔ Her desire is still undiminished after a stellar career.



SUNETTE VILJOEN
Picture: Gallo Images

Wesley Botton

Having made a statement with a solid comeback performance on Saturday, javelin thrower Sunette Viljoen believes she has the ability to return to the top of the world rankings in her discipline.

After missing the 2017 World Championships in London due to a back injury, Viljoen returned last year to secure her fourth successive medal at the Commonwealth Games, earning bronze on Australia's Gold Coast.

Though she went on to win gold at the inaugural World Cup meeting in London in July, however, she was again sidelined by injury which derailed the rest of her 2018 campaign.

Returning to competition at the Gauteng North league meeting in Pretoria at the weekend, following her move to Tuks this season, Viljoen launched a 61.64m heave to surpass the 61-metre mark for the 12th year in a row.

"I'm very happy with my performance," she said.

"I think it was a good start for me and I'm not surprised with the distance I threw today.

"I've been working hard since the World Cup last year where I got injured, and I just wanted a solid start. My goal was to throw over 60 metres."

A former medallist at the World Championships and the Olympics, Viljoen was chasing elusive titles over the next couple of seasons.

Holding a career best of 69.35m, which she set in New York in June 2012, she also felt she could rattle the world record of 72.28m held by Czech athlete Barbora Spotakova. "I never get tired of throwing the javelin," Viljoen said.

"Every morning I get up with the desire to improve and to be a

better athlete than the previous season.

"The things I've already achieved are just unbelievable to me, but I still have a few things I want to achieve: I want to be a world champion and an Olympic champion, and I want to break Spotakova's world record," said a fired-up Viljoen.

