



Tatjana Schoenmaker won a silver medal in the women's 200m breaststroke at the previous Student Games. Photo: Reg Caldecott

Tukkies on their way to World Student Games

A Commonwealth Games champion, a World Cup gold medallist, two junior world champions and a current World Cup football player are among the Tuks athletes who will be representing South Africa at the World Student Games in Napoli, Italy, next month.

There is a real chance that one or more of them will be strong medal contenders at the event.

- During the previous Student Games, Tatjana Schoenmaker won a silver medal in the women's 200m breaststroke. That was the confidence booster she needed, as during last year's Gold Coast Commonwealth Games she won the 100m as well as 200m breaststroke events. She set Africa and national records in both events.

Schoenmaker's season's best time of 2:24.11 ranks her 20th in the world at the moment, but it should be remembered that she swam it in April during the South African Championships in Durban. Her time of 1:06.83 in the 100m breaststroke currently ranks her 14th in the world.

It is guaranteed that Schoenmaker is going to be faster at the Student Games.

According to her coach, Rocco Meiring, her challenge should always be to be faster, especially when competing internationally.

During the Commonwealth Games, the Tuks swimmer won the 200m breaststroke in 2:22.01 and the 100m breaststroke in 1:06.41.

- Danelle Wentzel made local sports history in May when she won a gold medal at the Hyundai Archery World Cup in Antalya, Turkey.

She is the first South African archer to win an individual event in an elite category at a World Cup.

According to Wentzel, archery - especially when competing inter-

nationally - tends to be a mind game.

"The one who can handle the pressure the best is the one who is going to win. What stood me to good stead during the World Cup in Antalya was that there was never a moment that I was thinking about the final outcome.

"Before each shot, my whole focus was making sure that I got to execute 'the process' to perfection," Wentzel explained.

- Sokwakhana Zazini and Zeney van der Walt both won world titles in the 400m hurdles at the IAAF Youth and Junior World Championships, respectively.

Maritza Coetzee, who coaches Van der Walt, said one of her best qualities is never giving up. She is prepared to take the battle right up to the line as she proved during the Youth World Championships.

"I am confident that Zeney is going to improve on her best time of 55.05s this season; whether it will be at the World Student Games remains to be seen. If she does, there is a real chance that she could medal," Coetzee concluded.

Zazini is on record stating that he does not race to lose and therefore will never allow himself to be intimidated, no matter who he is racing against.

What is exciting about Zazini's performances up to now is that he has improved his times each time he raced.

During the South African Championships he finished second in a time of 49.33s, which is a mere 0.01s off his personal best time of 49.32s.

- Mapaseka Mpuru is currently playing for Banyana at the Women's Football World Cup Tournament in France.

Thirty-three Tuks athletes will compete at the World Student Games from 3-14 July, which is the most from any university.

