

LJ van Zyl equals World Record

LJ van Zyl not only today won the 200-hurdles in a time of 22.10s at the GreatCity Games in Manchester but he also equalled the world record set by Andy Turner in 2010.

Van Zyl was afterwards quite modest about his hasty performance.

“I am truly blessed to have run such a fast time. Actually it was a privilege to have done so.”

It is the second time that the Tuks/hpc-athlete has won the 200-hurdles in Manchester. In 2013 he won in a time of 20.63s.

Turner is s a retired English track and field athlete who specialised in the 110 metres hurdles. He won a bronze medal at the 2011 World Championships in Daegu.

“The conditions were far from perfect. It was cold and rainy but that has sort of become the norm during the GreatCity Games,” Van Zyl said.

“I decided beforehand that I was going to race hard right from the start and that is exactly what I have done. I led the race from the first to the last hurdle sort of setting the challenge to the rest of the athletes to catch me if they can. Throughout the races I felt in total control proving that the hard work that I have doing over the last few weeks are starting to payoff.”

Ray Stewart (USA) was second in 22.85s and Felix Sanchez (Dominican Republic) was second in 23.08s.

Van Zyl said that he was inspired by Sanchez a two time Olympic champion (2004 and 2012) presence in the race.

“I really admire Felix for what he has achieved in international athletics. He has proved that anything is possible through dedication and hard work and that is what I am striving to do.”

Irma Reyneke (coach) said Van Zyl’s performance is not a surprise to her.

“I could see during the last training sessions that he is ready to run fast times. I am really proud for what he has achieved.”

LJ is not the only Van Zyl who impressed today. His wife, Irvette, who is 21 weeks pregnant finished 9th in a time of 34.49 in the Spar 10km Ladies Race in Port Elizabeth.

Asked about her husband’s fast exploits she said: “I am so glad for LJ but actually he has got no option but to run fast times as he has son on the way that is going to look up to his dad.”

According to Irvette Van Zyl their first born is going to be a son.

In spite of her pregnancy there is no stopping her.

“I planning to compete in the 12km race in Cape Town next weekend and then I also would like to do the Spar Race in Durban but I still need to discuss that with my coach, Lindsey Parry.”

In Potchefstroom at the South African Open Wenda Nel (Tuks/hpc) kept her word and won the 400-hurdles in a time of 54.90. Her goal was to win in a time faster than 55 seconds.

It is the fourth time that she has managed to run a time faster than 55 seconds in the 400-hurdles.

According to Reyneke Nel Nel struggled slightly over the first 150 metres to find her rhythm.

“I think the fact that she raced the 400 metres the day before was the reason for the slightly sluggish start, but I am happy.”

Nel won the 400 metres on Friday in 52.09s.

