



Although Pukke won the event on Friday, performance in the 100m.

# Upcoming triathlon star shines

A mere three years ago local upcoming triathlon star Tsebo Botsane would give any swimming pool a wide berth.

And with good reason – she could not swim.

“I could sort of stay afloat by doing some form of doggy paddling, but it could not be called swimming,” she laughed.

However, a lot can change in three years primarily if somebody commits to a specific goal.

Botsane made local triathlon history at the recent Continental Cup-meeting in Troutbeck, Zimbabwe when she raced to a second place finish in her age category. It was possibly the first time that a black South African triathlete medalled at an international meeting.

If the grade 10-learner from the TuksSport High School has her way, it indeed won't be the last. She has set her sights on winning a medal at the South African Triathlon Championships in Bloemfontein also.

She admits that it is going to be tough, but she is not going to give up without a fight as she is on a mission to prove that there is not such a thing as a sport in which white athletes excel or vice versa.

“A lot of my friends are scared to participate in triathlons because they cannot swim.

“I want to prove that anybody can do any sport as long as they are prepared to seriously commit to hard training and not be fazed if they fail at first.

“It might sound a bit arrogant, but I want to become a role model in female sport. I know a lot of hard work still awaits me, but if I can stay focused I think there is a real chance that I can get to represent South Africa at an Olympic Games,” she said on a more serious note.

At the Continental Cup-race, her swimming was not too bad.

She was about the fourth athlete out of the water. It was during the cycling leg that she suffered.

She blames it on the hilly course. Luckily she did not lose her focus and fought back well during the run to ensure a podium finish.

Kate Roberts, a former Olympian, coaches her. She has been predicting for a while now that Botsane could become a trailblazer in South African triathlon.

“Tsebo has got that something special as an athlete and that excites me.

“My challenge is to make sure that she gets to fulfil her real potential but with her passion and dedication, that is easy.

“What helps is that she is a driven and quick learner.”



Tsebo Botsane in training.  
Photo: Reg Caldecott

