

# Schoenmaker makes a splash

STRIKING a blow for female swimming, Tatjana Schoenmaker became the first woman since 2013 to qualify for the Fina World Championships when she posted a qualifying time of 2:25.23 in the 200m breaststroke in the Kings Park Pool in Durban.

After missing two major championships without female representation, including the 2015 World Championships and the Rio Olympic Games, Schoenmaker wanted to give women's swimming something to cheer about.

"I am very happy because now I showed that there are girls out there who can swim the times and it is not only me. The young girls are coming," Schoenmaker said.

"I'm tired of everyone asking what's the problem with women's swimming. There is nothing wrong, so I proved that we are still coming."

Schoenmaker has been on the radar over the last year, first posting an Olympic qualifying time in early 2016 but she missed the mark by 0.01 second at the trials.

She met the mark at the Swimming SA Grand Prix Series in Stellenbosch in February posting a new personal best 2:24.93 taking a second-and-a-half off her previous top time.

However, the Financial Science student at the University of Pretoria is likely to miss the world championships due to her study commitments.

"I don't want to miss too much of varsity. I want to focus on my studies as well, but there is another opportunity at World University Games (in Taipei) which is just outside my exams times," Schoenmaker said.

"It will fit perfectly into my schedule but otherwise the main goal is the Commonwealth Games trials."

Earlier, Chad le Clos declared "the king is back" when he posted his fastest time in South Africa in his 100m butterfly semi-final, cementing him in second place on the world rankings list. It was a night of renewal as Le Clos showed his best form in



**FAST LADY:** Tatjana Schoenmaker became the first South African woman since 2013 to qualify for a world championships after posting a qualifying time of 2:25.23 in the 200m breaststroke at the National Aquatic Championships at the Kings Park Aquatic Centre last night.

PICTURE: BACKPAGEPIX



**CHAD LE CLOS**

years while rising star Zane Waddell clocked the eighth fastest 100m freestyle by a South African (49.09secs).

Le Clos touched the wall in 51.56 seconds improving his season's best by almost three quarters of a second, which is the second fastest time in the world so far this year.

Dominating proceedings at the South African Championships, Le Clos posted his fourth world qualifying time adding the 100m butterfly to the 200m freestyle and butterfly, and the 100m free style

from earlier in the week.

"I was just hoping to break 52 seconds, I went all out and didn't hold back so I am very happy with that," Le Clos said. "This is by far the fastest time at nationals. It is one second off my best. I am ready to improve."

Nineteen-year-old Waddell was left to fight a lonely battle after Douglas Erasmus and Brad Tandy, who posted world qualifying times in the 50m freestyle during the morning heats, scratched from the final and semi-final respectively.

Tandy set another qualifying time during the semi-finals clocking 21.99secs with Erasmus doing the same, winning his race in 22.39secs.

Teenage sensation Rebecca Meder claimed her fourth senior title of the championships when she touched the wall first in the women's 800m freestyle in a time of 8:49.49.

The 14-year-old has already won gold in the 1500m, 200m freestyle, and the 200m Individual medley will complete her campaign in today's 400m IM.