


SILVER FOR COETZEE
 YOUTH OLYMPICS

STRIKING another blow for women's sport, Duné Coetzee became the first South African female to win a medal in the pool at the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires on Monday evening.

Coetzee won the women's 200m butterfly silver medal at the quadrennial showpiece posting a new personal best time of two minutes, 11.71 seconds (2:11.71) which is also a new South African age-group record.

"It has been one of my lifelong dreams to become a Youth Olympic champion so definitely dreamt about this moment," Coetzee said.

"I actually only remember the moments after the race and when I received my medal and seeing my parents.

"Everything was amazing and I can't actually explain the feeling."

Coetzee's victory came a day after Amber Schliebusch won the country's first triathlon gold medal on Sunday.

The 16-year-old Coetzee, who was the youngest member of the South African team at the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, made up for a sluggish start to touch first at the halfway mark.

Her hold on the gold medal was short-lived with Hungary's Bianca Berercz gaining on her stroke for stroke to hit the wall first in a time of 2:10.37.

Coetzee touched well ahead of Australia's Michaela Ryan, who rounded off the podium with a time of 2:13.12.

The Afrikaans Hoër Meisieskool learner chopped a massive 0.67s off the previous personal best of 2:12.38 she posted at the Commonwealth Games in Australia.

The Tuks swimmer's coach, Linda de Jager, said although she believed her charge would be at her best, she was surprised by her medal-winning performance.

"Don't get me wrong, I knew Duné was in form and I certainly knew how tenacious she can be once she has set her mind on a specific goal," De Jager said.

"I only expected her to improve on her best time but winning a medal was a nice surprise to me."

While Coetzee exceeded expectations, South Africa's flag bearer, Michael Houlie, fell short of the promise he held going into the men's 100m breaststroke final.

Houlie was the overwhelming favourite in his specialist event, posting the fastest time ever at the Youth Olympics in the semi-finals.

The Bishops matric pupil made a flying start, taking the lead out over the first 50 metres and turning in a new Youth Olympic best and South African 50m record with a split of 27.43 seconds.

Houlie's advantage soon faded as the rest of the field gained on him with Chinese swimmer Jiajun Sun overtaking him to claim victory in 1:00.59.

The South African had to be content with fifth place, finishing well below his best clocking 1:01.70.

The women's 4x400m medley quartet of Mariella Venter, Coetzee, Kate Beavon and Christin Mundell finished sixth in their final, clocking 4:17.78.

China took the spoils in 4:05.18.

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