



Duné Coetzee in action at the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) in Argentina.

**PHOTO: GALLO IMAGES**

GO-GETTER is the term that crops up often when people close to Duné Coetzee speak about her swimming abilities.

And the Tuks swimmer proved why yesterday when she became the first South African female to medal at the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires.

She finished second in the 200m butterfly. Her time of 2:11,71 is a new South African age-group record.

Coetzee had not the best of starts in the final. At first she was lagging in fourth place but stroke for stroke she started to catch up, by the halfway mark she was in the lead, but unfortunately, her heroics took its toll.

Hungary's Bianca Berercz passed her to win in 2:10,37. Michaela Ryan (Australia) was third in a time of 2:13,12.

The Tuks swimmer's time is quite an improvement on the 2:12,38 she swam earlier this year during the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

Linda de Jager, who coaches her, admitted that she was surprised by Coetzee's 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, but I only expected her to improve on her best time. Medalling was a nice sur-

prise to me."

De Jager immediately added the real challenge now is to ensure that Coetzee will qualify for the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

When listening to the coach talk about Coetzee the impression one gets is that the young swimmer will compete in Tokyo because apart from being highly motivated she is also not scared of putting in the long hard hours.

One of the biggest challenges facing South African swimmers when it comes to being at their best for international competitions is surviving the winter. According to De Jager due to it being so cold in June and July she scaled down Coetzee's training to one session a day, which was far from ideal considering that she had to be at her best for the Youth Games.

"Duné decided that over the last three weeks she had to do something to make up for the lost time in the pool. She did so by coming to training earlier than usual two days of the week.

"On Sundays she trained on her own. Doing 10x400m. It meant she swam up to 55km in a week. To be honest, Duné might have slightly overtrained. However, I was not worried as she is as hard as nails ..." said De Jager. — SuperSport.

