

Loungo Matlhaku and Micah Fernandes are students at Tuks High School and have been making some noise in the South African sporting world over the last few months. In person, Loungo (18) and Micah (16) both exude a quiet, reserved nature. However, they are both making themselves heard on the sporting scene. With an abundance of achievements already to their names, we decided to interview the pair and get a better understanding of what makes these young athletes so 'noisy'.

Loungo, the youngest of three siblings, is a 100m and 200m sprinter from Botswana. She remembers sprinting competitively for the first time at the age of 13. It was just a year later at the age of 14 that she realized she wanted to pursue the sport further and become a sprinter. Four years on, Loungo boasts an impressive record of achievements in the sport. With Gold in the 200m and Silver in the 100m at the 2011 African youth championship, as well as a Bronze in the 200m at the 2013 African junior champs, it is fast becoming clear that she would have reason to boast. This young sprinter's ambition is irrefutable as she attempts to replicate the type of success achieved by her long-time role model, American sprinter and Olympian Allyson Felix, by casting her eyes on Gold at the World junior champs as well as the Commonwealth Games in August this year.



# Making Noise

*Text: Murray Sutcliffe | Images: Reg Caldecott*



Micah is a sixteen year old swimmer from Nairobi, Kenya, who specializes in breaststroke. It took him very little time to discover his knack for swimming, shortly after learning to swim at the age of six. With his parents both being architects, a career in swimming may not have been on the cards for the young athlete. However, after breaking the African junior record for 200m breaststroke last year (2013), it is difficult to picture the swimmer anywhere other than in the water. Impressively, Micah currently holds the records for all breaststroke events in Kenya, and hopes to continue breaking records at the junior Commonwealth Games in Glasgow this year. He has also qualified for the Youth Olympic Games in August this year – an achievement which he is very proud of, as he was not a wildcard pick, but rather qualified on merit. Micah hopes to one day follow in the footsteps of his idol, Kenyan swimmer Jason Dunford, who was awarded a Gold medal for butterfly at the Commonwealth games in 2010. When asked what advice he would give to any aspiring swimmers that are hoping to gain the same type of success that he has achieved, he responded whole-heartedly: "It has taken me a while to get to where I am now, so you have to always be patient and just keep on working hard. I've seen how far I've come and it's taken me a long time. I was joking with my friends the other day because we used to be amazed by the swimmers that we used to watch, and how fast they were in their last heats, and now we're there; it takes time."

We fully expect to be hearing a lot of noise reverberating around the tartan tracks and swimming pools of the sports world over the coming months. I would advise you to keep an ear out, and listen for the names Loungo Matlhaku and Micah Fernandes.