



Friday, 02 February 2018

Africa's fastest man, Akani Simbine opens 2018 season at inaugural Grand Prix Series

The fastest man in Africa, Akani Simbine will start his 2018 season on Thursday, 08 March 2018 at the second of three Athletix Grand Prix Meetings at the Bestmed Tuks Stadium in Tshwane.

Simbine firmly secured the title of 'fastest man in Africa' in 2016 when he clocked 9.89sec in the 100m in Hungary. Fast times however are no longer his only driving force. Simbine wants titles, global titles and 2018 is the year in which the 24-year-old is looking to start his collection. His first target will be the gold medal in the 100m at Commonwealth Games in Australia in April this year.

The journey to chasing those titles in 2018 starts in South Africa at the Athletix Grand Prix Series at the second Meeting of the Series in Tshwane. He has run three of his fastest 100m times and his best 200m time at the Tuks Track at the University of Pretoria.

"2017 was a disappointing year for me. I had much bigger expectations than the 5th place finish at the World Championships. I wanted a medal, but was hampered by an ongoing hip injury," says Simbine. "I intend to change all that in 2018 and what better place than to start at the Athletix Grand Prix Meet on my home track at Tukkies?"

Tukkies has certainly seen some of the best runs by the 24-year-old. It was here that he became the first South African to do the sub 10sec, sub 20sec double in the 100m and 200m respectively, when he clocked 9.93sec for the 100m and two hours later flew to a lifetime best of 19.95sec in the 200m on 4 March 2017. It was here that he ran 9.92sec, 9.95sec and 9.98sec in the 100m - his second, third and tenth fastest times, respectively.

"I train here. I like this track. It is fast and you are always guaranteed fast times," says Simbine. Since opening with a sub 10 in 2016, there is now an expectation on Simbine to dip the mark every time he lines up in the glamour event of Athletics. "This is my target every time I go into the blocks. It is all about the execution. If I execute correctly, then a sub 10 is coming."

With the Commonwealth Games taking place in April and the 100m final being run on Monday, 09 April, the Athletix Grand Prix Meet in Tshwane on 08 March is the perfect race for Simbine to make a statement to his opposition who will be lining up against him in Australia.

"If I want to win titles I need to dominate and if I want to dominate then I need to do that from the very first race. Doing that in front of my home crowd on a track that I know and love is the perfect place to start."

Ominous words for his rivals and exciting words for his supporters back home that will be able to witness the action first-hand. They are guaranteed a show from the fastest man in Africa.

EVENT INFORMATION: Athletix Grand Prix Series

Dates and Venues:

Thursday, 01 March 2018	Ruimsig Stadium, Johannesburg
Thursday, 08 March 2018	Bestmed Tuks Stadium, Tshwane
Thursday, 22 March 2018	Dal Josafat Stadium, Paarl



Ticket Prices:

Main Pavilion Tickets

Standard Ticket:	R 100 each
Children under 16 years of age:	R 50 each

Open Stand/Grass Banks

Standard Ticket:	R 50 each
Children under 16 years of age:	R 50 each

ONLINE TICKET SALES will open on **Wednesday, 14 February 2018**. Tickets can also be purchased at the gates of each event.

Facebook: AthletixGrandPrix

Twitter: @AthletixGP

Instagram: [@athletixgrandprix](#)

Website: www.athletixgrandprix.com

About Athletics South Africa:

Athletics South Africa (ASA) is the national governing body for the sport of athletics (including track and field, cross country, road running and race walking) in South Africa, recognised by the IAAF, and also a member of Confederation of African Athletics. The association is based in Johannesburg.

ENDS



For media queries, please contact:

Sifiso Cele
ASA Media Consultant
081 394 2597
sifiso.cele@athleticssa.co.za



For media queries, please contact:

Jacky McClean
PR and Media Manager
083 291 9283
jacky@newsportmedia.tv