



ATHLETICS SOUTH AFRICA NPC
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WEEKEND ATHLETICS ACTION ROUNDUP

Some of South Africa's fastest men have fired warnings ahead of the ASA Senior T&F Champs + Combined Events Champs at Tuks Stadium next month, storming to fast times in Tshwane as the various ASA Provincial Track and Field championships got under way at the weekend.

At the high-altitude AGN Championships held in the capital city, 20-year-old Olympic sprinter Clarence Munyai stole the show on Saturday's second and final day of competition, clocking 10.10 in the 100m semi-finals to chop 0.10 off his Personal Best.

Munyai, however, did not take up his lane in the afternoon to run in the final.

Former World Championships 200m bronze medallist Anaso Jobodwana went on to win the 100m final in 10.07, with the benefit of a +3.3 m/s tailwind, ahead of Henricho Bruintjies (10.15) and Thembo Monareng (10.18).

World 800m champion Caster Semenya turned out in the 400m sprint event, storming to a convincing victory in 52.45 as she sharpened up for the Athletix Grand Prix series next month.

On Friday, 17-year-old World Youth champion Sokwakhana "Soks" Zazini clocked 49.86 in the 400m Hurdles Men heats, though he also did not compete in the final, which was won by LeRoux Hamman in 49.76.

In the 10 000m Women race, which was held as a mixed event with men, Glenrose Xaba delivered a super performance to finish in 32:59.05, more than four minutes ahead of the second lady.

At the KZNA Championships in Durban, Cassidy Williamson was among the standout performers, winning the 100m Women and 200m double in choppy conditions.

Over the longer distance she clocked a handy time of 23.51 with a +3.3 m/s tailwind, and she covered the short sprint in 11.97, running into a +2.3m/s headwind.

Nkosinathi Sibiyi was also in good form in the 1 500m Men final, crossing the line more than 13 seconds clear of his nearest opponent in an impressive 3:41.93 solo effort.

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Meanwhile on the international front, IAAF World Championships Race Walk fourth place finisher, Lebogang Shange and Paralympic star Ernst van Dyk delivered solid performances on the road overseas.

Opening his international season in style on Saturday, Shange coasted to victory in the 20km Men race at the Memorial Jerzy Hausleber in Monterrey, Mexico, an IAAF Race Walking Challenge event.

The national record holder finished in 1:24:32, with Mexico's Carlos Sanchez taking second place in 1:24:59, while SA 50km record holder Marc Mundell ended 28th in 1:39:11.

With his performance, Shange climbed to a tie for first place in the standings, equal on 12 points with Andres Chocho of Ecuador after two legs in the annual series.

Elsewhere, in Japan, wheelchair racer Van Dyk grabbed third spot in the elite men's battle at the Tokyo Marathon in 1:31:30.

Japanese athlete Hiroyuki Yamamoto won the race in 1:26:24, taking the wheelchair title at the first World Marathon Majors race of the year.

"This past weekend served as a preview what we must expect to see in the next few weeks leading to the ASA Senior T&F Championships," declared Aleck Skhosana, the President of ASA. "Coaches and athletes will go back and fine tune whatever needs to be done in preparation for the SA Championships.

"We thank all the provinces that conducted successful championships this past weekend. We urge all the provincial federations and schools athletics structures to ensure that youth and juniors in the respective provinces of ASA are given priority attention it deserves.

"We are going to select a strong SA teams out of these competitions at national level to represent this country at the international championships in 2018. So it makes sense to make sure that athletes at the district and provincial level especially school going are assisted to be part of the mainstream athletics.

"There, we urge the Departments of Sport and Recreation, plus Basic Education to support these structures so that all the youth and junior athletes get the opportunity to attend and participate in these championships.

"We also congratulate Shange and Van Dyk who managed solid performances which ended with podium finishes, ensuring that South Africa remains respected."

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