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MANYONGA REACHES IAAF WORLD INDOOR CHAMPS PODIUM

Luvo Manyonga was the star performer, standing up for the South African team on Friday evening in the Long Jump, on Day 2 of the IAAF World Indoor Championships in Birmingham, England.

Manyonga secured the silver medal with a best leap of 8.44m, adding four centimetres (4cm) to his own African record and falling just 2cm short of Cuban gold medallist Juan Miguel Echevarria.

It was South Africa's first medal at the biennial indoor championships since 2010.

The remaining members of the SA team struggled to mount a challenge for the podium in a tough Long Jump battle, with Ruswahl Samaai taking sixth place (8.05m) and Khotso Mokoena ending 14th (7.53m).

On the track, Carina Horn did well to put up a fight, but missed out on the 60m Women final by the narrowest of margins.

After taking second place in her heat in the morning session, she went on to finish third in her semi-final in 7.18, just 0.01 outside a spot in the medal decider.

Dominique Scott-Efurd also delivered a brave effort, turning out in two middle-distance events. Having taken ninth place in the 3 000m Women final on the opening day of the championships, clocking 8:59.93, she finished fourth in her 1 500m heat on Day 2, crossing the line in 4:09.80 and missing out on the final.

“Congratulations to Manyonga for his achievement,” said Aleck Skhosana, the President of Athletics South Africa. “It is a wonderful achievement to pick up our first indoor medal after eight long years.

“Never for one moment have we ever thought the indoors were going to be easy. Even our usually medal performing athletes have found the competition quite a challenge.

“We however continue to have high expectations of our athletes, even though we recognise all the hard work that has been put by each member who has or is still in the competition.”

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