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For Immediate Release
24 March 2023

NAEEM JACK BREAKS SA YOUTH HURDLES RECORD AT ASA AGE GROUP CHAMPS - Day 2

There were some spectacular performances throughout the second day of competition on Friday, but Naeem Jack was outstanding with a record-breaking effort at the ASA U16, U18 and U20 Track and Field Championships in Pietermaritzburg.

Jack was superb in the boys U18 110m hurdles final, with the Boland Athletics (BOLA) athlete slicing his tall frame over the barriers to win gold in 13.25 seconds, breaking the SA youth record of 13.26 by one hundredth of a second.

Werner Bezuidenhout of Athletics Gauteng North (AGN) also ran well but he had to settle for the runner-up spot in 13.34, with Morne Engelbrecht securing bronze in 13.70 for host province KwaZulu-Natal Athletics (KZNA).

"I was trying to hype myself up for this because I ran the 200m (semi-finals) just before my race, but I went into the blocks, just relaxed and got a good start," Jack said afterwards.

"You won't be able to execute anything if you tense up and that's caused by pressure, so I just stayed relaxed and let my mechanics and rhythm guide me through the race, so that's how I got through it."

While he had hoped to break the SA U18 record, Jack said he hadn't expected to achieve the feat this season, so the performance had been somewhat of a surprise.

"The record was an aim for me, but not for this year because it's my first year in the U18 age group so I'm still U18 next year, but it's a bonus because now I can chase my own record next year."

Aside from Jack's record run, the best track event of the day was delivered in the girls U18 400m final, with three athletes locked in a battle for the line in a blanket finish.

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Colene Scheepers grabbed a narrow victory to secure the gold medal in 53.92 seconds, holding off her AGN teammate Zante van der Merwe who earned silver in 54.05 and Chane Vermeulen of Central Gauteng Athletics (CGA) took bronze in 54.16.

In other standout performances on the track, Johannes Morepe won the boys U20 1 500m final in 3:44.47, Leendert Koekemoer (CGA) won the boys U18 400m in 46.38 and Phenyoy Miyen (AGN) won the boys U16 100m hurdles in 12.54.

Athletes in field events also produced a great deal of excitement in front of great spectatorship at Msunduzi Athletics Stadium, spearheaded by a hard-fought contest in the men's U20 hammer throw final.

Charl Greyling came out on top in the colours of Athletics Free State (AFS), launching a 66.49m heave to win gold, with Christopher Smit of Western Province Athletics (WPA) being edged into the silver medal position with a best attempt of 66.10m.

Among the other highlights, Ethan Olivier of Athletics Vaal Triangle (AVT) won the boys U20 triple jump with a 16.43m leap, Hencu Lamberts (AGN) won the boys U18 shot put with a 19.33m throw, Zak Naude (AFS) won the boys U18 discus throw with a 62.66m effort, Ashley Erasmus of Athletics Mpumalanga (AMPU) won the women U20 discus throw with a best attempt of 52.35m, Heidi Booysen (CGA) won the girls U16 shot put with a 16.92m heave and Heidi Booysen (CGA) won the girls U16 discus throw with a 44.96m effort.

"It was another excellent day for our nation's top young athletes who gained a great deal of experience by competing at such a high level," said Athletics South Africa President, James Moloi.

"Well done to all the medallists who have proved their immense abilities. We expect many of them to shine for South Africa one day on the international stage and these results are an indication that we have a very bright future in our sport."



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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, is a member of World Athletics and the Confederation of African Athletics. The association was formed in 1995 and is based in Johannesburg.

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