

Nemisa runs skills programme to help retired boxers

Digital knowledge a step towards becoming an independent entrepreneur

ANATHI WULUSHE

In a fight to help retired Mdantsane boxers who face unemployment, the National Electronic Media Institute of SA (Nemisa) and the Eastern Cape Socio-Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC) and Kumkani Community Radio have started digital skills training at NU2 Mdantsane Library.

The programme which kicked off on Monday will last eight weeks, ending on September 30. On completion the former boxers will receive a National Certificate in Film and Television Production (NQF Level 5).

The training includes producing audiovisual content using a mobile device (tablet), applying the skills of storytelling and technical skills of shooting, editing, packaging, and publishing, using creative producing skills for digital platforms and online marketing spaces. ECSECC project manager Xolile Martin explained: "Mdantsane was put on the map by boxing. We have seen the plight of former professional boxers, some world and SA champions, who at the end of their ca-



FRESH START: Former SA flyweight champion, Ncedo Cecane and former IBO junior bantamweight world champion Lwandile Sityatha attend the Nemisa digital programme at the NU2 Mdantsane Library. Picture: SUPPLIED

reers are left with nothing to show and no skills outside boxing that they can use to be economically active."

In the training programme are former SA flyweight champion Ncedo Cecane, former Eastern Cape champion Sthembile Luzipho,

son of veteran boxer Mveleli Luzipho, former SA junior welterweight champion Sikhuluwe Sidzumo, former IBO junior bantamweight world champion, SA flyweight champion Lwandile Sityatha and former female boxer Nomakhaya Sunduza.

Nemisa's Doc Frik said the programme would provide a platform for these boxers to learn entrepreneurial skills.

Veteran boxer Cecane, who trains Nkosi-nathi Joyi and many of Mdantsane's up and coming amateur boxers, said the programme was an opportunity for retired boxers to learn new skills.

"This will be an opportunity to learn something new, digital skills, and be part of boxing in some other way. They can be photographers and videographers who help in local documentaries, be part of commentators and be part of film crews," he said.

World champion Sityatha, who is unemployed, said the programme was a good initiative.

"Many ex-boxers are unemployed and it is hard for them to find jobs because they do not even have a matric certificate as they did not finish school. An initiative like this will give them new skills to start businesses of their own."

Michaela Whitebooi working hard to achieve Olympic dream again

AMIR CHETTY

Gqeberha-born judoka Michaela Whitebooi will be working hard to gain automatic qualification as she dreams of competing on the Olympic Games stage again.

The cream rose to the top for Whitebooi when she was crowned the U48kg judo champion in her Commonwealth Games debut earlier this week.

Now the diminutive fighter is looking to better her opening round defeat to Paulo Pareto, a world champion at the time, as she aims for the Olympics again.

Coming into the final round, where she was guaranteed at least a silver medal, she overcame India's Shushila Devi Likmabam — beating the Glasgow 2014 silver medallist — with a golden score Waza-ari after they had ended without scoring in regulation time.

"I was truly just happy, my smile said it all.

"All the emotions came from what I had to go through to get to that moment.

"She was the favourite to win from the crowd and also from her previous game's silver medal, so just winning the gold filled me with joy," the 25-year-old, who started the sport at the Booyens Park Judo Club, said.



GOLDEN GIRL: Gqeberha-born Michaela Whitebooi of Team SA competes against Shushila Devi Likmabam of Team India during the women's judo 48kg final at the 2022 Commonwealth Games on Monday, in Birmingham, England. Picture: GETTY IMAGES

With Paris 2024 now firmly in her sights, the University of Pretoria-Tuks alumna will be hard at work towards her Olympic dream.

While her main focus was on her own performances, Whitebooi did a little research on her final opponent, describing her as a talented fighter with a very strong grip.

"I watched her fight from the previous fights, she is a strong fighter who holds a grip tight.

"She then remains static and does one powerful attack, so I knew I had to fight her grips off and keep moving for the whole fight," a tactic which worked very well in the end, Whitebooi said.

"When we both had two penalties on the board, I told myself 'now you have to keep attacking at all times so she can look passive and you can score.'

"And in the end, it worked," she said.

Her proudest moment came when she stood on the top step of the podium, draped in her national colours, gold medal around her neck and singing the national anthem, as she knew

she wasn't only doing this for herself, but for all her supporters back home in SA as well.

"I have pushed myself really hard and made a lot of sacrifices leading up to the games.

"It was a difficult couple of months and knowing that I pushed through all the hardships to claim the victory brought me to tears.

"I knew I was going to get a medal with the mindset I had.

"God helped me achieve the ultimate result of getting the gold medal," she said.

Whitebooi hopes her victory will inspire the next generation of judoka to follow in her footsteps.

"I hope this will show all the young girls to push to their limits and not stop until they have reached their goals.

"Development of the younger generation for Olympics 2028 should already be starting now, so they grow and succeed when it is their time.

"Going to the Olympics doesn't just happen over four years. It took me more than 10 years to achieve my dream of participating in the Olympics."

Close results in any-age race from Graaff-Reinet

ALAN WEIMANN

The difference in effect that the release times of the east Cape and Border racing pigeons had on the most recent race outcome could not have been more significant.

The yearling birds were liberated at 7.45am at Graaff-Reinet, a distance of 325km to East London and a shorter 270km to the Kowie lofts, with the any-age birds going 30 minutes later. While the average flying speeds of the winning birds in both events were comparable at just over 90km/hr, it was the time that it took to fill the result sheet that was surprising.

Whereas the yearling Top-10 required seven minutes to fill all 10 positions, with the any-age birds no fewer than 75 birds were registered within seven minutes of the winning bird.

It was a highly successful day for Alan and Charlotte Kemp of Northerns when their first three arrivals clinched the top three spots with the winning bird posting a flying speed of 91.9km/hr.

Fourth position went to an Abbotsford Club bird flown by Darryl Nel at 91.1km/hr. It was expected that on the West route, the Kowie pigeons would no longer face the challenge of the extra distance to be flown and indeed this was the case when Richard Wedderburn 'dropped' two birds together at 89.6km/hr to take sixth and seventh positions.

As already indicated, the any-age race saw exceptionally close racing with the Top-10 birds on the result sheet being separated by only two minutes.

Honours went to Tinus Marais and Henry Quirk (Northerns), with their first pigeon registering 90.4km/hr. Dave Lutge of the Comrades Homing Society clocked the second pigeon registered at 90.2km/hr with Russel Smith and daughters, Nikita and Cammy (also of the Northerns club), taking third place at 90.0km/hr.

From here on down the result sheet it was a case of just seconds and, in a number of instances, milliseconds, separating the pigeons on the result sheet. What was unexpected was the fact that the first Kowie pigeon, clocked by Koos Kooy could only manage 85.8 km/hr, and unlike in the yearling race where the Kowie birds appeared frequently up the result sheet, the Kowie lofts found themselves somewhat adrift in this race.

The next race is scheduled for Willowmore and here the flyers further down the coast will enjoy the advantage of a race point 100km nearer than their East London competitors.

RESULTS

EAST CAPE AND BORDER HOMING UNION / GRAAFF-REINET : YEARLINGS (632 birds)
— 3. Kemp Family Loft (NFC); 4. DA Nel (NFC); 5. & 8. Weimann & Sanders (NFC); 6. & 7. S & B Wedderburn (KRPC); 9. Tokkie Zeelie (KRPC); 10. Rob Noah (KRPC).

EAST CAPE AND BORDER HOMING UNION / GRAAFF-REINET : ANY-AGE (649 birds)
T & H Lofts (NFC); 2. & 6. D Lutge (CHS); 3. RC Smith & Daughters (NFC); 4. S Amos Brown (AFC); 5. Charne & Greg Loft (NFC); 7. I Lutge & Son (CHS); 8. Jacobs Loft (AFC); 9. & 10. D Hartwig (NFC).

Key: AFC- Abbotsford Flying Club; CHS — Comrades Homing Society; KRPC — Kowie Racing Pigeon Club; NFC- EL Northern Flying Club.

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