**Top sprinters to showcase new High Performance Complex**

REACTION times, speed, efficiency of movement and ground reaction forces will take centrestage when South Africa’s top sprinters test the capabilities of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s new High Performance Complex (HPC) later this month.

Star speedsters Akani Simbine and Roscoe Engel will be the first to benefit from an analysis provided by the world’s first Kistler piezoelectric double force plate research starting block within the country’s only indoor research sprint track at the launch of the R34-m complex.

But thereafter, the HPC will offer wellness support to the extended community and their research expertise and facilities to sportsmen and women, particularly within the Eastern Cape.

“This is the only facility of its kind in the metro and province. It's here so that we can help sportsmen and women to reach their potential but it also offers wellness support to the community," says NMMU's School of Lifestyle Sciences Director Prof Rosa du Randt.

The double-storey HPC is home to the university's departments of Human Movement Science, Dietetics and Sports Management, the Eastern Cape Academy of Sport (ECAS), the Biokinetics and Sports Science Unit (BSSU), several labs, gyms, the research sprint track and all services offered by NMMU's Madibaz Sport.

But for now Simbine, who has broken the 10s barrier twice, and SA 4 x 100m relay team regular Roscoe Engel will be privy to the facilities and research possibilities when they go head to head against each other in a 60m race.

The entire event will be live streamed - so ostensibly all sports fans can watch the sprint showdown at about 3pm on Wednesday 30 September. Go to the NMMU homepage on [www.nmmu.ac.za](http://www.nmmu.ac.za)

For Engel, the pre-race research analysis he will undergo will be keenly welcomed as he trains himself at the Belville Athletic Club in Cape Town and is not privy to such performance enhancing insights.

Although Simbine is based at the University of Pretoria he is happy to lend his support to any facility that develops sportsmen and women with potential.

Research shows that 80 percent of the country's top athletes are groomed and nurtured in high performance centres. The addition of the NMMU High Performance Complex, especially in the country's poorest province, is a boon to a country that will be expected to seriously boost its medal count should it host the Commonwealth Games in 2022.

But perhaps of greater importance is the positive impact the complex can make in terms of its wellness offerings. Apart from its gymnasiums, the Complex offers a vast array of services from nutrition advice to communities to rehabilitation programmes for accident victims.

“We are here to grow wellness for all and maximise performance of talented sport persons along the entire development pathway,” adds Prof du Randt who has spent 15 years fighting for such a complex for the Eastern Cape.

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