**Benefits of High Performance support**

ONE of the benefits of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s (NMMU) new High Performance Complex (HPC) is the delivery of expert services to six priority sports – rugby, cricket, netball, soccer, hockey and athletics – by the Biokinetics and Sport Science Centre (BSSU) staff.

“We decided to begin our work ‘at home’ so the first group to benefit from our high performance support is our priority sports teams,” says NMMU School of Lifestyle Sciences director Prof Rosa du Randt.

And so to assist with assessments and effective follow-up with the individual players and athletes, one full-time biokineticist or sport scientists is committed to two sporting disciplines.

The work by the BSSU includes the assessment of players/athletes, the identification of weaknesses and potential injuries, early rehabilitation, strengthening and conditioning as well as the necessary training – all to give them the edge over opponents.

”In addition, our teams have access to sophisticated biomechanical analysis to enhance their performance,” says Prof du Randt.

Apart from the country’s only 90m fully-enclosed indoor tartan research track with its accompanying Vicon 3D motion analysis system, high speed cameras, Kistler force plates embedded into the track, and the world’s first multi component piezoelectric double force plate starting block system, there are a number of other laboratories aimed at assisting players and athletes to optimise and maximise performance.

The physiology lab where an individual’s work capacity is measured is one of these, another is the vision lab where gaze behaviour is measured.

“This is of great value for youngsters and coaches.”

According to Prof du Randt bone density and body composition measurement are also undertaken by sports scientists in the complex.

Assessment of all players is undertaken at the beginning of the season to help the coach with planning training programmes for the teams.

“To do strengthening and conditioning, you need the correct equipment. We have the equipment that is needed,” says Prof du Randt.