

Medals for varsity students

TNA REPORTER
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NELSON Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) athletes Cherise Sims, Garth Ellis and Divan Manuel, returned home with three silvers and a bronze medal from the Confederation of Universities and College Sports Association Games (Cucsa) in Bulawayo two weeks ago.

Sims, who grew up in East London, surpassed her own expectations by winning silver in the 5 000m and bronze in the 800m while Ellis and Manuel collected silvers in the high and long jumps respectively.

The 23-year-old Sims was forced to focus on the 5 000m after her main event, the 3 000m steeplechase, was cancelled and she also entered the 800m which she hadn't

run since high school.

In the 5 000m, the part-time business management student found herself in second place with three laps to go, but failed to catch the leader.

An even bigger surprise came in the unplanned middle-distance event in which she set up her podium position with a strong final 200m.

More than the medals, the NMMU athlete said she enjoyed meeting like-minded athletes and representing her country.

"The whole experience of putting on that kit that says South Africa and actually representing your country was special," she said.

Sims is impressive off the track as well, cramming her studies

and athletics training in with her physiotherapy job at Dora Nginza Hospital.

She said perseverance was key, but she was also appreciative of the support from the university that allowed her to travel.

Manuel, who started out as a cross-country runner in the Boland, set several personal bests this season.

He credits much of his success to his Madibaz Athletics Club coach Jenny Kingwill. He found the games challenging. He was in Italy preparing with his occasional training partner, Rushwahl Samaai, for Rio.

Although it was hard to cope with studies, training and travelling, he said his lecturers were very supportive.

Ellis, a Port Elizabethan, hoped



WINNING: Madibaz high jumper Garth Ellis came home with a silver medal from the Cucsa Games in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

for gold, but the human movement science student said he was pleased with his runner-up spot.

"It was quite a long season for me," the 24-year-old first year homeopathic student, who has his sights set on the Word Student

Games in Taipei next year, said.

"But I just continued with the same training," which, he explained, consisted of technique, speed and plyometrics. "You don't change a winning recipe."

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