

# New goal for swim-star twins

## Sights set on world champs after continental success

**A**FTER a successful African Championships in Bloemfontein last month, NMMU-Madibaz swimming twins Alard and Alaric Basson have their eyes set on the World Short Course Championships in Canada.

The 20-year-olds from Uitenhage returned from the continental meeting with a bunch of medals and will be looking to put that experience to good use next month.

Alaric, a breaststroke specialist, brought home a gold medal in the 100m breaststroke and silver in the 200m event, as well as golds in the 4x100 mixed and men's medley relays.

Although spending many hours in the water under the tutelage of coach Mark Edge, Alaric said they always kept their focus on the bigger picture.

"All the training can be quite tough, but then you have to look at what your goals are," he said.

"At the moment it is the Worlds but, ultimately, I'm aiming for the 2020 Olympics and my mindset is always on that prize.

"To have a chance of achieving something like that, you have to make a lot of sacrifices and you can't just say you don't feel like training."

The second-year student-athletes, both of whom are studying building engineering at NMMU, said they started swimming at an

early age. "Our dad saw us in the pool at home and felt we had some talent so he signed us up for the local Dolphin Club," Alaric said.

"From there we eventually linked up with Mark and have been with him for 11 years."

Like his brother, Alard said he was happy with his results at the African champs, where he took gold in two relays and bronze medals in the 50m and 100m butterfly events.

"Considering we were at altitude, which we are not used to, I was pretty pleased the way it turned out."

With Tokyo 2020 in the back of his mind, Alard said he was focused on putting in an extra effort to improve his chances.

"You always have to go the extra mile and push yourself to the limit," he said.

"I always think of the other guys who are also training, so you have to push yourself even harder to have the edge."

He said he had been inspired by South African star swimmer Chad le Clos and had learnt much from him.

"For me, the ultimate hero is Chad because he is very humble and one of the best in the world.

"He does so many things phenomenally well, such as his precision underwater... something I strive to emulate."



**TWIN POWER:** Madibaz swimming stars Alard, left, and Alaric Basson won several medals each at the African Championships in Bloemfontein recently  
Picture: FULL STOP COMMUNICATIONS