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Entertainment 27.9.2015 10.00 am

21 ICONS featuring Lucas Sithole

Citizen reporter

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Lucas Sithole, the former soccer-playing boy from a small mining town in KwaZulu-Natal, tells photographer Gary Van Wyk about his journey to becoming Africa's top wheelchair tennis player, and why he won't quit until he is number one. Picture: Supplied

21 ICONS will feature Paralympian wheelchair tennis player and South Africa's top quadriplegic wheelchair tennis champion, Lucas Sithole.

Sithole has been selected for 21 ICONS South Africa Season III to showcase that people can make the best of their situation if they are able to surpass adversity and strive to be the best version of themselves. Sithole is one of the faces of the Wheelchair Tennis South Africa organisation and optimistic about his role in society. He believes that by focusing on an end goal we can all have an impact on others and the world we live in. He is actively involved in promoting tennis to disabled people and advocating diversity in the sport and fights against stereotyping and intolerance of people with disabilities.

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"I think if I wasn't disabled, and if God didn't give me this chair I wouldn't be a motivator to the youth and to other kids living with disability...I give them hope that there is a life in a wheelchair," he says. During a portrait sitting, Sithole tells Van Wyk how his life abruptly changed at age 12 when he was hit by a train in Dunhouser, KwaZulu-Natal. He lost both his legs and most of his right arm in the accident. However, this did not stop him from reaching for dreams and setting big goals. Despite being a triple amputee he set out to strive for greatness and has reached his goals.

For the portrait 'Against the Odds', which will appear on the same day his short-film is released, Van Wyk describes the visual elements, "Sithole is photographed on a tennis court, racquet in hand, seated in the chair that he has collected his numerous titles in. With his fierce stare to camera and his racquet poised for battle, the lines of the tennis court converge to form V's for 'Victory' at different angles, representing Sithole's personal and professional battle to become the best at what he does."

On the future of South Africa, he comments, "Everything is possible as long as you put your mind to it and you are ready to work hard for it."

Watch 21 ICONS at 19h27 on SABC 3.

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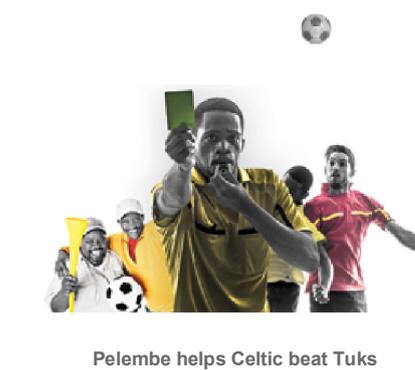
He deserves it

- It's way too much, considering that he doesn't have a matric certificate
- SABC is a success partly because of Motsoeneng
- There are other deserving people like teachers

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