

Young Durban designers conceptualise SA Commonwealth Games kit

The countdown to the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games is in full swing - and the young designers recruited to create Team South Africa's kit for the Games' opening ceremony are eagerly awaiting the moment their locally designed and developed kit takes to the world stage.



Image supplied: A sneak peek at the new Commonwealth Games Leisure and Sportswear

The proudly South African kit was unveiled at a fashion show event held at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre (ICC-Durban) on 14 July in collaboration with Mr Price Sport, the KZN Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, the EThekwin Municipality, the Durban ICC and the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (Sascoc).

The Commonwealth Games, or the 'Friendly Games' as it is also known, is an international, multi-sport event that takes place every four years and the Games have grown exponentially over the decades to its current spectacle of 6,600 athletes from 72 nations.



Why the V&A's new Africa Fashion exhibition is important - and long overdue

Benita Odogwu-Atkinson 20 Jul 2022



The 22nd Commonwealth Games will burst into life on 28 July and the curtain comes down on 8 August. The event is expected to have a global audience of between 1 and 1.5-billion viewers.

The same young Durban designers who brought us the Team SA kit worn by our Olympians at the opening ceremony in Tokyo last year have been roped in once again. This year, however, the design process has unfolded differently. The team of four joined forces to create the bold print seen across the kit, while Durban Fashion Fair designer, and Class of 2021 fashion student, Nontsasa Benstwana, brought the look together in her final design.

President of Sascoc, Barry Hendricks, said, “Team SA really caught the eye at the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics in their Mr Price Sport kit. They were the envy of many other nations from the opening ceremony to the closing ceremony and all the competition in between. Having seen the designs and kit for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, we are expecting the reaction in Birmingham to be no different.”



Image supplied: A sneak peek at the new Commonwealth Games Leisure and Sportswear

“Congratulations to all these inspiring young designers who have used their creative skills to come up with something truly South African and kit that will be worn with pride by Team SA’s athletes at the opening ceremony. We are going to look outstanding not only during competition but away from it as well as on the medals podium,” Hendricks added.

The visionaries behind the designs are:

- Self-taught sewist, director of her own label Jado Mjadu, and Lindiwe Fashion Skills Academy graduate, Nompumelelo Mjadu
- Director his own label, SVL Designs (a label for dreamers, comprising uniquely designed, timeless garments) and Lindiwe Fashion Skills Academy graduate, Sipho Lushaba
- Multimedia Fine Arts graduate and director of his own brand, Sandile da Creative, sAnd!Le_da_creActive, Sandile Sikhakhane
- Durban Institute of Technology graduate and founder of clothing label ZuluM, Mbali Zulu

The final stage in the design process concluded with Durban Fashion Fair designer, and Class of 2021 fashion student, Nontsasa Benstwana who created the final opening ceremony elements. These then went through a final selection process where the Mr Price Sport sponsorship and merchandise teams picked the piece the athletes will step out in. “I never once imagined that I would be chosen for a project like this. It is a great opportunity. I believe this is the start of bigger and greater opportunities to come,” Benstwana said.