



Communication and Marketing Department
Isebe loThungelwano neNtengiso
Kommunikasie en Bemerkingsdepartement

Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa
Welgelegen House, Chapel Road Extension, Rosebank, Cape Town
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 5427/5428/5674 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 5628

www.uct.ac.za

4 October 2018

UCT hockey player set to represent South Africa at Youth Olympics in Argentina

First-year physiotherapy student Nepo Serage has been making big waves in hockey circles since becoming the University of Cape Town's (UCT) first-team goalkeeper just eight months after joining the squad. Eighteen-year-old Serage will be jetting off to Buenos Aires, Argentina as part of the team representing South Africa at the Youth Olympic Games from 6-18 October.

Serage has played hockey since she was in grade one and has gone from strength to strength – not just at UCT, but at provincial and national level – since arriving at the university at the beginning of the year. But she nearly didn't sign up for varsity hockey as she didn't know how she'd pay for her goalie kit.

"I was worried about the finances. I didn't want to burden my parents, but I applied to join the team anyway, and when I got in, my father was so proud. He said we'd make a plan whatever happened," she said.

The young hockey player has had a great deal of support from the university.

UCT sports administrator, Clinton Maart commented: "Considering she's only 18 and in her first year at UCT, she has done incredibly well in hockey. As a player, she's amazing and in a class of her own. She always goes the extra mile and works so hard for her sport. We really see Nepo going places in her hockey and we wish her so well."

Of her upcoming trip to Argentina – her first trip overseas – Serage said: "I know it will be hard, because we will be playing Argentina in their own country. I keep thinking of the crowds that will be supporting them, but I'm trying to keep my cool. I am really looking forward to this. I keep telling myself my job is easy, as all I have to do is stop the ball!"

Earlier this year, Serage was selected to play for the U18 Western Province team that participated in an interprovincial tournament (IPT) in Pietermaritzburg. The team won, she was voted Goalkeeper of the Tournament and she was also selected for the South African U18 side.

A week after the IPT, she was included in the SA team that won a challenging three-match series against the Australian U18 side in Durban.

In July, her UCT team won the B section at the University Sports South Africa (USSA) games.

In September, she kept goal for the U21 Western Province team that won their interprovincial tournament in Pretoria.

As for her future ambitions, she has her sights set on the Junior World Cup in 2021.

“That is the goal I will work towards for now. Then, hopefully one day I will play for the national team as goalie. I wouldn’t play in any other position,” she said.

When Serage watched former goalie of the SA team, Sanani Mangisa, it inspired her to keep playing and dream of making nationals. Serage’s other inspiration in hockey is Ongeziwe Mali who is currently in the national hockey team.

But Serage’s main inspiration is her family.

“We have this thing at home that no matter what happens we are always there for each other. Come good, we are there. Come bad, we are there. I can count on the stable support and love of my family at all times. We have often struggled with finances, but we have always supported each other and managed to come through.”



UCT’s first-team hockey goalkeeper Nepo Serage

Photo: Arnold Dippenaar Photography

ENDS

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

Angelique Botha

Media Liaison and Monitoring Assistant
Communication and Marketing Department
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
Tel: +27 (21) 650 2583
Cell: +27 (64) 276 6234

Email: angelique.botha@uct.ac.za
Website: www.uct.ac.za