

Stop the clock

Dusi Canoe Marathon, 17-19 January 2008

The record books will reflect that then 24-year-old Thulani 'Mike' Mbanjwa became the first black paddler to win the famous Hansa Powerade Dusi Canoe Marathon between Pietermaritzburg and Durban, but they don't tell the story of the drama after this picture was taken. This is day two, a 45km test, and Dreyer has what he openly admits is a brain implosion, aggravated by mixed messages from their seconds, and shoots the nasty rapid Thombi on the wrong side of the pinnacle rock. 'It could have, should have, ended our

race right there,' recalls Dreyer, who was partnering Mbanjwa and was himself winning the Dusi for the seventh time. They survived a horrific capsizing without damaging their boat, but lost all their lead accumulated from the first day, when they had won the 40km stage in 2hr 32min 47sec. Fortunately their class running with the boat on the 35km final stage saw them to victory on the last day. Their total time was 7hr 33min 24sec. Ant Stott and Wayne Thompson finished second and the strong-flowing river, ideal weather conditions and the closeness of the competition resulted in the top three pairings breaking the course record. In the women's competition, Alexa Lombard and Abbey

Miedema won in 8:46:03, beating Laura Thompson and Robyn Kime (9:05:06). The race was tainted by some 45% of the field reporting that they had been affected by 'Dusi guts', from a dirty river and they experienced diarrhoea and vomiting. Where are they now? Mbanjwa, in his 13th Dusi, is the strong favourite to win The Unlimited Dusi which starts on 16 February, paddling with Sibonelo Zondi, who was born and raised in the Valley of a Thousand Hills and learned to paddle under Robert Lembethe at Nagle Dam. Dreyer has retired from professional racing and oversees the Change-A-Life Academy that produced the fancied Mbanjwa-Zondi boat.



South Africa 4 years ago

► **Shaun Pollock retired from** international cricket after the third Test against the West Indies in Durban, aged 34. He took 420 Test wickets and 387 in ODIs and

played in 108 Tests and 298 ODIs.

► **Bafana Bafana finished bottom** of Group D (draws with Angola and Senegal and a defeat to

Tunisia) and failed to qualify for the knockout stages of the Africa Cup of Nations, won by Egypt.

► **Trevor Immelman, after**

winning the Nedbank Golf Challenge, underwent surgery to remove a benign calcified fibrosis tumour (the size of a golf ball) from his diaphragm. The surgery in December 2007 was a success, and he went on to win the 2008 Masters.

► **Racing superstar Pocket Power** became only the second horse in history to complete the Queen's Plate-J&B Met double at Kenilworth. He went on to win the Queen's Plate four times and the Met three times.