

# Hoping for strong Dusi showing

Nhlanhla Cele, Thulani Mbanjwa, Sibonelo Zondi and Thomas Ngidi.



PHOTO CREDIT: KYLE GILHAM / GAMEPLAN MEDIA



Thulani Mbanjwa and Sibonelo Zondi pick their way through Tops Needle en-route to victory in last year's The Unlimited Non-stop Dusi.

## >> Ground-breaking academy strives to train winners

### FEVER REPORTER

**P**ADDLERS from the ground-breaking Change A Life Academy in the Valley Of A Thousand Hills are targeting five of the top 10 places in The Unlimited Dusi canoe marathon that starts on 16 February.

Spearheaded by the fancied title hopefuls Thulani Mbanjwa and Sibonelo Zondi, both of whom were part of the original core group that started the academy with tutor Martin Dreyer, the flourishing training group is bristling with talented K2 crews positive about their chances of racing into the top

10, and ideally onto the podium.

A careful browse through the academy's impressive list of top achievements and a quick glance at results from recent races around the country and one soon realises just how formidable an outfit the Change A Life 2012 Dusi squad is and the pedigree they bring to this year's spectacle.

"Obviously Bungee (Thulani Mbanjwa) and Sibonelo (Zondi) are the most recognised guys to have come through our academy and we are hoping for great things for them in this year's Dusi but there are many other really talented guys in our squad as well," said multiple Dusi winner Dreyer.

"The Cele brothers (Richard and Nhlanhlayakhe), Thomas Ngidi and John Negobo and Lucas Mthlane and Mmeli Cele will all be hoping for a top 10 finish, while it will be very interesting to see just how Nkosi Cele and Skhumbuso Ngidi go.

"Then there's Kwanda Mhlope who, even though he's now part of the new professional team Best 4 Kayak Centre and will partner Lance Kime, we still consider as one of our own and are excited about their chances of finishing in the top five," he added.

The group has been hard at work preparing for the biggest event on the Change A Life calendar and are optimistic that their efforts will be

rewarded when all the action gets under way.

"After the KZN river season last year a lot of the guys stayed fit and kept the Change A Life flag flying high by doing some multisport events midyear, where some of them really did well. Then, once the rivers filled up a bit, the guys have been training immensely and are in fantastic shape at the moment," said Dreyer.

"We know the potential some of them have and, without getting

ahead of ourselves, are definitely very excited for this year's Dusi."

Under Dreyer's watchful eye several of the Change A Life squad, many of whom are from the Valley of 1000 Hills, have made phenomenal progress and the academy now finds itself on the brink of potentially dominating the top 10 of this year's K2 race.

The Dusi starts at Camps Drift, Maritzburg, and ends at Blue Lagoon. More info at [www.dusi.co.za](http://www.dusi.co.za)