



ASTONISHING

World champ Tamsyn sets sights on Beijing

Jim Wilson
 ATHLETICS

NEWLY crowned world champion Tamsyn Lewis was last night back running the streets of Valencia in Spain declaring she has unfinished business in Beijing.

While her coach and brother Justin, and her supporters urged Lewis to celebrate her stunning victory in the 800m at the world indoor championships, the 29-year-old resisted the temptation and instead resumed her training program for the Olympics.

Lewis attended a gala dinner to mark the end of the world championships when she showed off her gold medal, but stuck to soft drink, maintaining her no-alcohol regimen until after Beijing.

"I was on cloud nine and I still can't believe what happened in the final but I just wanted to soak it up and then get back to the job of preparing for Beijing,"

Lewis said.

"I was drained at the end of the day and was physically and mentally exhausted, so alcohol was off limits. I intend having a sleep and then going for a good hitout in the morning because the main event still awaits in five months."

Lewis's effort in Valencia upstaged some of the event's biggest names, including Mozambican veteran Maria Mutola.

Mutola was attempting to win an eighth world indoor title but Lewis outsmarted the African 800m star, relegating her to the bronze medal.

Ukraine's Tetiana Petlyuk was second but the night belonged to Lewis who stormed to the biggest win of her career.

"All the way around, all I kept saying to myself is 'oh my god, oh my god' because I knew I had an opportunity," Lewis said. Maria left me an opening and I grabbed it on the inside and that was a huge boost in then reeling in Petlyuk.

"I crossed the line and just couldn't believe it and I was shellshocked. I was stunned and so emotional and right now I still can't believe it."

The time of 2min 2.52sec was well outside the world record, but victory struck a psychological blow for Lewis ahead of Beijing.

Her aim of making the Olympic final in the 800m could now include a possible podium finish at the Games.

"I'm not getting ahead of myself but to win this is a massive lift for my prospects for Beijing," Lewis said.

"I have always known I've got the ability and the fact I'm injury free and loving my racing are bonuses. My support crew is incredible."

It was the breakthrough win for Lewis internationally after she made her debut as a 16-year-old at the Commonwealth Games in Canada in 1994.

Last week, she won her 13th national title.



AIMING high
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victorious
Tamsyn
Lewis
displays her
gold medal.