

the only two unbeaten rugby teams — DHL Western Province and Border Ladies — look to extend their winning runs to three victories, while the Boland Dames and Blue Bulls Women go in search of their first wins of the season.

The action kicks off in Durban at 10am today when the Cell C Sharks Women host Border Ladies, with the match being broadcast live on SuperSport (channel 207).

Two matches will play out at 2pm as the Boland Dames welcome the Blue Bulls Women to Wellington, and DHL Western Province take on the EP Queens in Cape Town.

Both these encounters will be streamed live on Springboks.rugby.

The KwaZulu-Natalians will have their work cut out against the Border Ladies, who boast an impressive track record against them with comfortable victories in their last three outings — two of which were in

Durban. While the hosts will be aware that they need to step up their attack after scoring a combined total of only 12 points in their first two matches of the season, they will be inspired by knowing the East London side were made to work hard for their 17-10 and 17-11 victories in the opening rounds.

DHL Western Province will also look to stick to their winning ways when they host the EP Queens at DHL Newlands, and to maintain their domi-

nance against the visitors after recording victories in their last three matches. The defending champions have been in fine form, scoring the most points (67) and registering the biggest wins so far in the competition.

The EP Queens, meanwhile, started their campaign with a win against the Cell C Sharks Women, but slipped against Border Ladies last week, and they will be determined to avoid back-to-back defeats. In Wellington, the Boland

Dames and Blue Bulls Women will give everything to break their duck in the competition after going down in their last two matches.

The Dames, in particular, will look to step up their attack after scoring only 11 points so far, while the Blue Bulls Women will be highly motivated to bounce back from a disappointing 29-8 defeat against DHL Western Province last week, which will set the scene for a gripping encounter. — SA Rugby Media

Lewis Hamilton's comments about Formula One rival Max Verstappen suggest the Dutch driver is beginning to get to seven-times world champion Red Bull team boss Christian Horner said on Thursday.

The sport's most successful driver of all time, with 10 positions and 98 wins secured at the Monaco Grand Prix that, unlike him, Verstappen "feels perhaps he has to prove".

Red Bull's Verstappen said he had nothing to say.

"Lewis loves a bit of a show," Horner told television when any mind game is being played.

"Max does his own thing. Lewis feels it means that he's probably a little bit better."

Hamilton of Verstappen's three wins.

They won second place in the race.

Comrades champ Mothibi sets sights on Gqeberha ultra

Vuyokazi Nkanjani

Reigning Comrades Marathon champion Edward Mothibi has set his sights on victory — and a shot at a world record — in the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km in Gqeberha tomorrow.

The ultra-marathon, aimed at breaking the 50km world record, is being hosted by Nelson Mandela Bay municipality, and will be run along Marine Drive.

Mothibi's goal won't be an easy one given the quality of the men's field.

The Nedbank running club green dream team athlete won the Potchefstroom leg of the Cape Marathon in a new personal best of two hours and 16 minutes in October.

To ensure he keeps his winning momentum going, Mothibi

has trained meticulously for tomorrow's event in a special training camp, guided by his coach Dave Adams.

Some of SA's best ultra-runners will be in the field as they fight off the onslaught of the Kenyan and Ethiopian runners who are stepping up from their traditional 42.2km standard marathon distance to take on the ultra.

Three-times Comrades winner Bongmusa Mthembu, of Arthur Ford Running Club, and Comrades record holder David Gatebe, of Impala, look set to spearhead the SA challenge.

There will also be Nedbank running club's Juan Van Deventer who won his last race — the Om Die Dam 50km in March 2020 — before Covid-19 put an end to races worldwide.

Nedbank's Philimon Mathiba, who boasts a 2:13



THE CHAMP IS HERE: Edward Mothibi is one of the favourites in the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km, which will be run along Marine Drive, Gqeberha, tomorrow. Photograph: ANESH DEBIKY/GALLO IMAGES

marathon personal best (2019 Dublin Marathon) makes his debut in the ultra-distance event and will also be someone

to look out for.

Also in the running will be Nkosikhona Mhlwakana, of Maxed Elite.

The youngster is relatively new to ultra-distance running but won the tough Nongoma Zululand 56km on debut and will be remembered for crawling across the finish line in his debut Comrades Marathon in 2019, after losing a gold medal in the last 100m by dropping from 9th place to 11th.

The quickest man in the field is Ethiopia's Ketema Negasa, who boasts a 2:11:05 personal best in the marathon.

Next fastest is Negasa's Nedbank running club teammate, Kenya's Shadrack Kiptoo Kimaiyo.

His personal best is 2:12:52 but when one considers that the time was run at high altitude on a tough course in the

2017 Nairobi Marathon, he will definitely be a dark horse.

He will be joined by teammate and fellow countryman Melly Kennedy, who has already had ultra-marathon success in SA with two gold medal finishes in the Two Oceans Marathon.

Former Two Oceans winner Lebenya Nkoka of Nedbank running club Lesotho has speed and endurance and will want to perform well in an event that has given elite runners a chance to earn income and rekindle their hopes after the Covid-19 hiatus.

The men's race starts at 7.45am tomorrow with the first women going off at 7.15am.

You can catch all the live action on SABC2. It will also be live-streamed on the Nedbank channel on YouTube.