

# Three robbery suspects arrested when caught in the act in Welkom

**Marti Will**

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A tip off about three suspects scaling the wall of a property in Volks Road, Welkom, led to the arrest of three perpetrators.

On 16 November the Welkom K9 unit received a tip-off

about suspects jumping the wall of a house in Volks Road. They promptly reacted and the three suspects were caught red handed, while busy stripping copper cable and window blades from the house in Jim Fouché Park.

Copper cable weighing 5 500 grams and 18 window

blades, crowbar, pliers, a spanner and a sports bag with house breaking implements were found and seized.

The three suspects Thabang Ramatisa (26), Mpho Mphatsi (26) and Mpho Radebe (23) were charged for house breaking and theft.

They appeared in the Wel-

kom Magistrates' Court on 17 November.

The case was postponed for bail and the three suspects will appear again on 24 November.

The District Commissioner of Lejweleputswa, Maj. Gen Lerato Molale applauded the K9 unit.

"It is because we have more

boots on the ground that we were able to arrest these perpetrators and retrieve the stolen items.

The residents of Welkom were also thanked for trusting the police with information. It's all about good working relations between police and residents," said Molale.

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The white VW Polo that was seized in Winburg during a foiled burglary. Photos: SAPS

## Burglary derailed

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Acting on a tip-off, the Winburg police managed to foil a burglary, which involved foreign nationals, at a chain clothing store.

The station commander, Capt. Niniveh Landman, received a tip-off from residents that there was a burglary planned for 10 November at midnight, during loadshedding.

"They received information that there would be two white Volkswagen (VW) Polo's with no registration numbers, and that the suspects would be armed with handguns," says Capt. Stephen Thakeng, media liaison officer for the Lejweleputswa police.

Landman mobilised all police members who had taken rest days and formulated a strategy, says Thakeng.

A waylay was conducted at the clothing store, and a white Polo was seen passing the Winburg police station very slowly.

The suspects managed to cut open the roof of the clothing shop, then police members pounced on them.

The suspects started to run in different directions, shooting at police members who returned fire.

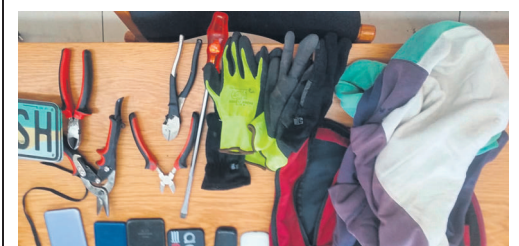
No-one sustained gunshot wounds during the shoot-out, says Thakeng.

Two suspects were caught red-handed with miscellaneous burglary tools in their possession. A white VW Polo was spotted near the crime scene, and the police discovered that the driver had with him a big hammer, bolt cutter and grinding machine.

The suspects, 25, 29 and 36 years old respectively, are from Botshabelo. They were arrested for business burglary and possession of house-breaking implements. The suspects will appear in the Winburg Magistrate's Court.

The Lejweleputswa district commissioner, Maj. Gen. Lerato Molale, applauds residents of Winburg for trusting the police with this sensitive information.

"Thank you to the station commander and his team members who were mobilised while on rest days and who ensured that there were more boots on the ground to enhance police visibility," said Molale.



The burglary tools that were seized during the operation in Winburg.

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Originally from Johannesburg, Caleb Webster works at BHBW in Hoopstad. He entered Master Mechanic because he was up for the challenge. "It is something special. I also decided to try something new that will help me in future, in addition to challenging me beyond my limits."

Caleb has not only been working on Massey Ferguson for three years to date but is also the youngest contestant. "I really like the technology side of the tractors," he says. An important part of Master Mechanic is to showcase this side of the brand.

Caleb insists he has red blood like Massey Ferguson, which has superior DNA. He adds that the Triple Triangle logo is significant, as the triangle is the strongest shape in nature. The three triangles in the logo overlap, so the strength is tripled. This represents the mutually beneficial relationship between farmers, dealers and the MF brand. "MF has brought out the best in me - which is why I am proud to be part of the Master Mechanic challenge," says Caleb.

Being the only female contestant in Master Mechanic is not daunting for Nico-Ann Hansen from BHBW in Bothaville, Free State. "I have already shown the men a thing or two or ten, so they can bring it on!" she asserts. Working at BHBW in Bothaville, Nico-Ann hails from Vryburg but ended up working at Barloworld in Johannesburg.

Nico-Ann entered Master Mechanic because of the challenge it presented her. "Being mostly in the field always presents its challenges. Every day you do something new; you never know what to expect. I am an exciting person so wanted to do something equally exciting!"

Nico-Ann says that Massey Ferguson is a wonderful brand. "There are many competitors, but Massey Ferguson excels in its market. There are few faults, as long as you adhere to the regular service intervals, which allows you to pick up on any faults before they become even bigger issues. For example, a tiny seal leak may seem inconsequential, but before you know it you have to replace a bearing."

Lodewyk 'Lood' Wiid from BHBW in Hoopstad, Free State describes his experience of Master Mechanic as being "challenging, stressful, painful and exciting." He has come a long way since working on the farm after school, when he soon realised it was his lifelong passion to work on tractors. He got the opportunity to do just that and completed his apprenticeship at OVK, qualifying in 2015.

Lodewyk has been working on Massey Ferguson machines since 2013, which means he has nearly a decade's experience with the brand. "It is a lovely tractor. I love the technology and the colour." He adds it is this depth of experience that has given him the expert knowledge needed to compete successfully in Master Mechanic.

Watch these guys battle it out on the next season instalment of the Massey Ferguson Master Mechanic. Get behind your local technician! Six technicians from all over South Africa battle it out in three teams of two for a grand prize of R100 000 and a trip to France to train at the Massey Ferguson Factory where these high horsepower machines are made.

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