



# Golden Tamsyn shocks herself and the world

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AUSTRALIAN middle distance runner Tamsyn Lewis was as shocked as the rest of the country when she claimed her first major individual title on the world stage.

Lewis, 29, outlasted a strong field including world and Olympic champion Maria Mutola of Mozambique to claim the 800m gold medal on the final day of the world indoor championships in

Valencia, Spain. She has been a fixture on the global athletics scene since 1994, when she was selected in the Commonwealth Games 4x400m relay squad as a precocious 16-year-old.

In the interim she has amassed 13 national titles over 400m and 800m, including a second straight 400-800 double last weekend in Brisbane.

But until now, individual international success had proved frustratingly elusive.

"When I saw that gap, I said to myself if I'm going to go down it might as well be in

spectacular fashion, so I took it and from then on everything went perfectly," Lewis said.

"I am in complete shock. I was happy to be in the final and then take whatever came from then on. But this... wasn't in the script. It's amazing."

Her winning time was two minutes 2.57 seconds.

Partner, Redbacks cricketer Graham Manou, said he was ecstatic to receive Lewis' phone call announcing her win.

"I don't think it had really sunk in yet, she was asking for confirmation," he said.



**WINNING FEELING:** Tamsyn after winning the 800m gold medal. Picture: FERNANDO BUSTAMANTE