

Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50 km Ultramarathon

26 February 2023



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31 January 2023

President of IAU to attend Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km

The third running of the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km ultramarathon takes place on 26 February in Nelson Mandela Bay and gracing its presence will be International Association of Ultrarunners (IAU) president, Nadeem Khan.

The presence of Khan at the event signals yet another sign of top-notch race organizing and hospitality which has seen the event receive not only gold label status from the IAU but also elite status from governing body World Athletics. This event was the first ultra-marathon in the world to receive elite status.

“I want to thank the organizers of the Nedbank 50km for the invitation to attend this year's edition,” said an excited Khan. “The race has brought some outstanding performances in the previous two editions, and I am looking forward to seeing that momentum carry over to this year's event as well.” Khan looks forward to the South African hospitality as well as the entire race weekend.

“Good races have certain aspects in common - good organization, good strategy and good visionaries laying down the path to the future and the Nedbank Runified 50km has certainly all these aspects in place - and their vision of a fast competitive event where records are broken has become a reality in the first two editions.”

With a fast and flat 10km loop which the athletes will have to navigate 5 times, athletes can't ask for a faster course that is legal. Norrie Williamson, a World Athletics technical delegate and one of few internationally recognized course measurers in the country, is excited for the return of the event.

“The Nelson Mandela Bay authorities, NB Sport and Eastern Province Athletics have established a reputation for top notch organization and attention to technical detail which, together with a flat and fast course, maximizes the opportunity for yet another lowering of the 50km world, continental and national records,” said Williamson.

The event will also have an added incentive in that an official timing mat will be placed at the 42,195km mark affording athletes to also register Olympic and World Championship qualifying times.

“The majority of the worlds and Africa's best athletes reside at altitude but have very few opportunities to race coastal marathons on the African continent which puts them at a major disadvantage,” said Williamson. “Having a certified marathon mark on this course is an opportunity for those who may not



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yet have the performance to be invited to either Europe or the Middle East to run a career changing time without the time zone challenge or travel fatigue.”

Ultra-running is a sport that is growing in popularity, attracting faster marathon runners but also in mass participation. “I envision the event growing not only in the caliber of athletes but also perhaps, an increase in mass participation in the event itself,” says Khan. “The 50km is definitely on the upswing and when we first initiated the idea of an IAU 50km World Championships it was meant to be a springboard for the marathon runners to step into the ultra-world and this is very evident in the 50km events we see globally today.”

The 50km world record has seen a big drop over the last 2 years. “The entrance of top marathon runners has brought faster times to this distance and made a mark in lowering that world record and the Nedbank 50km have done a tremendous job in that regard - inviting top runners to a very well-organized event,” said Khan.

The Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km is a by invitation only elite event, attracting world class runners from around the World. With over R1 million up for grabs in prize money and incentives, fans of the sport can also watch the action live with the event being televised by SuperSport.

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