

Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50 km Ultramarathon

26 February 2023



**BREAKING
BARRIERS**

Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km Ultramarathon set to return in 2023

After two successful editions, the third edition of the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km ultramarathon will be held in Gqeberha, on Sunday, 26 February 2023. The exclusive race will once again welcome top-tier elite runners and renowned industry names, making it one of the greatest running line-ups that South African running has ever seen.

In partnership with title sponsors, Nedbank, the 50km ultramarathon will be hosted by Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, Eastern Province Athletics (EPA), which is affiliated with Athletics South Africa (ASA), an organisation that is recognised by World Athletics (WA).

The Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers ultramarathon has been awarded gold status from International Association of Ultrarunners (IAU) as well as Elite label status from WA for 2023. This is not only the second year in a row for the event to achieve such an honour from World Athletics (WA) but it is also the first ever ultramarathon to receive a WA Elite label status.

“By virtue of this prestigious status, the event is now recognized by WA and the IAU as one of the leading ultramarathon events in the world. For a race to achieve this accolade after only two years is testament to the hard work and support from the entire race office team, volunteers and our amazing sponsors,” said Nick Bester, Race Director and Managing Director of Nick B Sport.

To date, the ultramarathon has witnessed two world record times in the men’s race, one world record in the women’s race, four world best age group times, and two continental records. Organisers are hoping to set another world record, as the 10km loop on Marine Drive saw Nedbank Running Club athletes Ketema Bekele Negassa and Irvette van Zyl set new 50km World records in the first year. This year, Negassa’s World Record was broken by South Africa’s Stephen Mokoka.

Besides the opportunity of setting new records, athletes will be rewarded financially for their performances with a generous total prize purse of R1 million and Nike vouchers valued at R120 000.

Nedbank has been a proud supporter of running for decades and with a 3-year partnership now penned with the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, the success of this event has set a high benchmark for road running in South Africa.

“We’re so excited to see some of greatest runners compete in this prestigious event and the prospect of a new world record makes it an unmissable event. We’re proud to be able to bring this event to South Africa as we remain a committed supporter and sponsor of road running in South Africa,” says Tobie Badenhorst, Head of Group Sponsorships and Cause Marketing at Nedbank.

Current Comrades marathon champion and Nedbank Running Club elite athlete, Tete Dijana, who also finished 2nd in this year’s Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km Ultra Marathon, has confirmed his participation as well as the 2021 Comrades marathon Champion, Edward Mothibe, who finished 3rd in this year’s Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km Ultra Marathon. The winner and runner up in this year’s Soweto Marathon, Ethiopia team-mates Daba Ifa Debele Gadisa and Bekele Gutama will also be on the start line.

South African top marathon athlete, based in Gqeberha, Melikaya Frans, will lead the pack of male contenders to pace their first 30km at the predicted World Record pace for 50km.



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Current Comrades runner up, Dominika Stelmach, will be heading up the women's field with 2022 Swedish Marathon Champion, Hanna Lindholm, who boasts a best marathon time of 2h28 minutes and finished 24th at this year's World Marathon championships in a time of 2h32.

Nedbank Runified 50km 2021 champion, Amelework Fikadu Boshu, who also finished 2nd in this year's Soweto Marathon, will defend her title and together with her Ethiopian team-mate, also running for Nedbank, Tinebebe Nebiyu Ali, who finished third at the Soweto Marathon.

South Africa's top marathon runner and Nedbank athlete, Stella Marais, will once again be leading the ladies as the pacer until the 30km mark, with Nelson Mandela Bay stalwarts Kelly Van Vliet and Two Oceans gold medalist Ntombesintu Mfunzi, keeping the Gqeberha flag flying high.

Follow the #NedbankRunified conversation on Nedbank's social media platforms for more information on Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers, which will be broadcast live on SuperSport and SABC.

The **ultramarathon** will be limited to a field of 300 entries only. Elite runners and competitive age group athletes who wish to compete in the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km ultramarathon, need to submit their CV to nbsport@lantic.net and nickb@lantic.net before **16 January 2023**. Qualifying athletes will receive an invite and voucher to enter online at easyreg.co.za website.

The Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km race is an official Comrades qualifying race.
Race Office Queries: **012-5410577**.

