

Birthday blast for Bosman

The Comrades winner will be having a 'party' as she runs Soweto Marathon

MATSHELANE MAMABOLO

CHARNE Bosman is going to celebrate her next birthday in Soweto and she could well have about 25 000 people at 'her party'.

The 2016 Comrades Marathon champion turns 41 on Sunday, November 6 – the day of this year's Soweto Marathon and is delighted at the coincidence.

"To be involved in the Soweto Marathon is very special this year because it will be on my birthday," Bosman said at the launch event held at the FNB Stadium yesterday. "It is such a historical race with the community coming out in their numbers to support us and a lot of landmarks to see. I would encourage everyone to take part in the race."

Bosman is yet to decide which of the three races she will participate in though.

"I've just been very busy in the last few weeks because (winning) Comrades was such a life-changing moment for me. Things have been very hectic, so even if I don't do the mara-

thon, I will do either the 21(km) or the 10(km). I will decide."

If Bosman is still pondering which race she will be competing in, her fellow Nike athlete and a former Comrades champion Claude Moshiywa has his mind made up as to his goal for the event.

"I started planning for Soweto early in the year and I will definitely do my best to bring the trophy home," Moshiywa responded to a challenge from Soweto Marathon Trust's Sello Khunou that the R200 000 prize money for the winner remains in the country.

"We can break the foreign dominance in this race," he added in reference to the fact that the previous two races were won by non-South Africans.

Last year's top three well all east Africans with Sintayehu Legese Yinesu of Ethiopia defending his 2014 title ahead of Zimbabwean Mike Fokoroni, and Kenya's John Kirui.

And Moshiywa, who previously ran the race as preparation for the Old Mutual Two Oceans and Comrades, believes he has the ultimate homeground advantage.

"I stay a few blocks from the stadium, I know Soweto very well so I have an advantage."

Said Khonou, who announced that they are aiming to have 5 000 more participants than the 20 000 who competed in last year's race: "We want the money to stay at home and we would like to encourage our local runners to do well this year."

Registration for the race that will start and finish at the magnificent FNB Stadium that hosted both the opening and final matches of the 2010 World Cup is open and will close on September 5. The organisers are targeting to have 9 000 runners do the marathon and 8 000 for both the 21km and 10km races.

Whether they will convince the multitudes to sing "happy birthday" for Bosman remains to be seen, although there can be no doubting the Comrade champ would rather prefer a winner's medal no matter the distance she will be running.



PARTY TIME: Charne Bosman, who won this year's Comrades Marathon, will celebrate her birthday at the Soweto Marathon.