

# Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50 km Ultramarathon

6 March 2022



**BREAKING BARRIERS**

4 March 2022

## All systems go for Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km

***After setting two new 50km world records and numerous age group best world times in last year's event, the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km returns to Marine Drive in Nelson Mandela Bay, bigger and better but with the same goal. Set new world records again.***

Elite athletes from around the world will be chasing the opportunity to grab a share of the R1.225 million prize money on offer with R130 000 going to the victor and an additional R150 000 for a new world record time. Should the athlete who achieves that also be a South African, a crisp R50 000 additional incentive can be pocketed courtesy of title sponsor Nedbank who have put an additional R200 000 towards the top 5 South African finishers amongst the men and women.

The times the athletes will be chasing belong to last year's victors. The Nedbank running club duo of Ketema Bekele Negasa and Irvette Van Zyl stole the show with Negasa finishing in 2:42:07 to set a new men's world record and Van Zyl stopping the clock in the women's race to set a world record of 3:04:23. Both runners are back for Sunday's showdown and are confident of another thrilling run but will face a strong challenge from athletes hungry to steal their limelight. In total, athletes from 8 different countries around the world will toe the line.

Before the gun will be fired on Sunday morning to mark the start of the ladies' race at 06h00 with the men going off at 06h30, the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km was already setting records when in January, the governing body of the sport World Athletics announced that the event had been awarded a purple elite label status. This label puts the event on par with many big city international marathons around the world. It is also the first and only ultra-marathon to ever receive this label from World Athletics.

"We welcome everyone back to Nelson Mandela Bay for the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of our event which promises to be even better than last year," said race director Nick Bester. "I have to commend the team for their hard work as well as the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality which officially will be the home of the event for the next 3 years and on Sunday our aim will be to once again put on a show that we hope will result in another 2 world records."

As with last year's race, official pacemakers have been tasked with going out at slightly faster than world record pace. In the men's race local athlete and superstar Melikhaya Frans will be joined by Gladwin Mzazi whilst Stella Marais will be tasked with taking the ladies out at world record tempo. "The pacemakers have a very important task on race day but even though they are pacers, if they feel good, they can continue on to finish the race," said Bester. "One must remember that last year Irvette was a pacemaker to 30km but felt so good she decided to continue, and it ended up that she broke the world record so maybe on Sunday we can see another surprise."

One thing for certain is that the Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km is never short of surprises and come Sunday morning, one can expect fireworks along Marine Drive. The Nedbank Runified Breaking Barriers 50km will be broadcast live on Sunday morning from 05h45 to 09h45 via SuperSport Channel 209 and Grandstand on SuperSport as well as livestreamed via the Nedbank running club National Facebook page and Nedbank's YouTube Channel.

Ends.