



Maas goes wire-to-wire to claim Altron Tour title at Blue Valley



The new format of the 2022 SPAR Grand Prix was launched in Cape Town last week. Photo: Reg Caldecott

SPAR Grand Prix series has new format

The SPAR Grand Prix series is back again this year and will now take place in five different provinces.

Mbombela, the Mpumalanga capital, has been added to the SPAR Grand Prix calendar, replacing Pietermaritzburg. The Lowveld city is an ideal venue, with its pleasant warm winter weather and low altitude allowing the athletes the best possible chance of running excellent times.

"SPAR is well known for the promotion and development of women in sports, especially in grassroot areas," said SPAR Lowveld Marketing Director Sean Komlosy.

At last week's launch of the 2022 SPAR Grand Prix Komlosy said this event in Mbombela, which will be hosted on July 16, will produce a solid foundation for the development and future sustainability of female athletes in Mpumalanga.

The other women's only 10km races will be run in Gqeberha (May 28), Durban (June 26), Tshwane (August 6), Johannesburg (October 2) and the last in Cape Town on October 23.

"The relationship between athletics and The SPAR Group has continued to outlive many others. This season, for instance, is another year of smiles for many athletes who will once again be happy to get another chance to run and a shot for top prize money. For many women, running is their life because it puts food on the table and each race of these series gives them that opportunity to work towards another pay day," said James Moloi, the President of Athletics South Africa.

Good news for the runners is that prize money has been increased to R170 000 for each race, with the winner receiving R30 000.

Entries for each race will be restricted to 500 runners, who will compete in the Open, Junior, 40-49, 50-59 and 60+ categories.

Points for the SPAR Grand Prix will be awarded to the first 20 runners in the Open category, with 20 points for the winner and one for the 20th-placed runner. Points will be awarded to the first five finishers in the age group categories.

For the first time since 2019, points will also be awarded to runners who achieve excellent times. In the age groups, five points will be awarded to all runners achieving the target time.

In the Open group, there will be a two-tier system for bonus points, with 10 points for exceptional times and five points for slower, but still excellent times. Juniors will earn points from the Durban, Tshwane

and Cape Town races. For the safety of the top athletes, based on the fluctuating Covid regulations and the unprecedented times we find ourselves in, SPAR have restricted each of the six races to 500 invited athletes. For all the other women who have loyally supported The SPAR Women's Challenges nationwide, SPAR have gone virtual again this year.

The SPAR Women's Virtual Challenge will take place on Saturday, September 3 2022 and entries are open. SPAR encourage all women to gather their friends together, work out a route in their local community and share in all the fun.

For more info, please visit the SPAR Women's Race website at www.sparwomensrace.co.za



Tadu Nare (Nedbank) from Ethiopia who is the defending SPAR Grand Prix champion has confirmed her intention to defend her title in the 2022 SPAR Grand Prix series. Photo: Carl Fourie



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