

Meiringspoort Optimum Half Marathon

Saturday 8 October, 2022

The Meiringspoort Optimum Half Marathon was run in De Rust on Saturday 8 October with over 3 400 entries and over 3 000 participants on the day. This is the first time since 2019 that the race has been held as Covid resulted in cancellations in both 2020 and 2021.

The De Rust community turned out in force to support the runners as well as their travelling supporters from as far afield as Gauteng, the Free State and the Eastern Cape. Over the weekend the Village was bursting with runners and their families and a great time was had by all.

*This report of the race and winners is supplied by **Wilhelm Stapper** – now a resident of De Rust.*

Bosman "speeds" to new record through Meiringspoort

*A new year, a new race with its unique challenges, seems all that changes during the **De Rust Optimum Meiringspoort** half-marathon. Lloyd Bosman won for the fifth consecutive year.*



The one difference from last year is that the athlete from Nedbank Running Club is getting faster. His winning time of 1 hour, 1 minute and 36 seconds is a new route record. Bosman is confident of being still faster. On Saturday (8 October), he took the lead from the gun. For the first ten or so kilometres, he was running at what he considered to be a comfortable pace. But then he started to up the pace. Increasing his lead stride for stride. "In the build-up to the race, I had put in some hard kilometres. I could feel it paid dividends. That gave me the confidence to go for it over the race's latter stages."

Bosman's two Nedbank RC training partners, Godwin Heyns (1:05:39) and Bernardo Fredericks (1:06:21), finished respectively second and third. Fredericks was quite excited by the time he had run as it was his fastest in seven years, over 21km.

*The bad news for athletes hoping to win the **De Rust Optimum Meiringspoort** race is that Bosman is not planning to relinquish his title as "Champion of the Poort". If he has his way, he will win for at least another five years.*



The veteran-athlete Hanlie Botha (Born 2 Run) won the women's race in a record time of 1:18:55. It is the fastest time by a female athlete in 12 years. Overall she was 9th. It was the first time the dietician from East London ran through the Poort. According to her, it was a fantastic experience.

Another veteran Melissa van Rensburg (Nedbank RC), was the second woman to finish. Her time was 1:25:59. The athlete from George was slightly disappointed about how her race played out. "I am certainly not as fit as I should be. That is why I ran like a true forty-year-old," Van Rensburg joked. She is passionate about being on the road and running. For her, it is a way to get a new perspective on things and life.

"People often joke and say we who run are mad. I never take offence, as everyone has a right to their own opinion. But I know that when I run, I find solutions for most of the problems I face in life. On a good day, my fellow runners and I can find solutions for the world's problems," she said, smiling.

Anel van Wyk (Nedbank RC) finished third in the women's race. She was timed running 1:29:40. Selwyn Matthews (Nedbank RC) won the men's 12.5km race running 38:55. The women's race was won by Jandri Snyders (Hartenbos). Her winning time was 54:21.

As well as the top athletes this was a day for the amateur runners who enjoyed the comradeship and fun of an event such as this. Based on this year's event the Meiringspoort Half Marathon will continue to grow and prosper over the coming years.

De Rust
14 October, 2022