

Liberty Health Rhodes Trail Run 2009

Snow Joke this Year

The Liberty Health Rhodes Trail Run has a reputation for being a cold tough thin air event and the 21st edition lived up to it's reputation and then some.

With the start temperature a mild -6°C runners were looking forward to a challenging but comfortable romp in the southern Drakensberg. The extraordinary Friday evening pre-race briefing had cautioned that conditions would be taxing although most had laughed at this as being pre-race hype.

Registration went jovially with runners treated to a glass of sherry while waiting in the queue and special 21st birthday cake arranged by Race Director Evie Raubenheimer.

After the first river crossing splashed water over ankles and the next brought icy water over knee caps realisation struck that this could become a classic even by Rhodes standards.

The Kloppershoek kloof was iced in places and with the cliff sides slippery many runners blood froze when traction was lost momentarily high above the rushing Kloppershoekspruit, flowing strongly from snow melt below them.

The Lesotho border road was the frosting on the run's 21st birthday celebrations. Runners slogged their way through knee deep snow as they experienced what they had come to the Liberty Health Rhodes Trail Run for. The Liberty Health Rhodes Trail Run was offering a treasure for memories. Snow angels were crafted, snow fights had and cameras captured the picturesque scene. Knee deep snow was initially fun and novel, but after 8 kilometres even the most fun loving was starting to experience some sense of humour failure.

Multiple uses were found for the mandatory space blankets issued by the organisers at registration. In addition to their primary use they were also used to create a make-shift splint and as a sledge to extract an injured participant.

Previous winner Trevor Toerien blitzed the field running away to win by the fourth widest margin in the history of the event, putting over 20 minutes between himself and the rest. The prestigious King and Queen of the Kloof awards, this year adjudged at Lesotho View instead of the traditional Mavis Bank, went to Trevor Toerien and Erina du Toit.

Results

Men :

- 1 – Trevor Toerien 4:30:50
- 2 – Cas van Aardene 4:51:24
- 3 – Mike de Villiers 4:51:27

Ladies :

- 1 – Erina du Toit 5:40:29
- 2 – Melanie van Rooyen 5:47:18

3 – Christine Claasen 5:57:48

Men 40+ :

1 – Trevor Toerien 4:30:50

2 - Mike de Villiers 4:51:27

3 – Allan Smith 5:00:09

Ladies 40+ :

1 - Christine Claasen 5:57:48

2 – Rentia Denissen 6:06:07

3 – Nicky Brouwer 6:36:49

Men 50+ :

1 – Kenny McCrindle 5:48:56

2 – Clark Kent 6:40:51

3 – Lauwrie Raubenheimer 6:46:24

Ladies 50+ :

1 – Wendy Fitzmaurice 6:41:27

2 – Glenda Badenhorst 7:27:23

3 – Vauneen Douthwaite 8:18:19

Men 60+ :

1 – Claude Schravensande 7:32:27

2 – Orton Becker 7:34:45

3 – Peter Cross 7:43:18

King of the Kloof : Trevor Toerien

Queen of the Kloof : Erina du Toit