



Tagging along with mums: Young disabled children guided by their mothers running during the recent marathon.



Race for all: The SHM is one of the few runs in the country which offers categories for the disabled.



Champs: Winners of the Women's Open and Men's Senior categories of the marathon showing off their medals; Lim (centre) and Subramaniam flanked by (from left) Looi, Nurul Hidayah, Mohd Haffis and J. Vignaswaran.

By **CHITRA S. NATHAN**
Photos by **UU BAN LEONG**

THE PRIZES may have been modest but the turnout was so overwhelming that the organisers of the Seremban Half Marathon (SHM) may have to cap the event to only 10,000 participants next year.

A record 11,500 runners including about 200 participating in the disabled categories turned up for the 24th edition of the SHM.

Organising committee chairman Datuk Zainal Abidin Ahmad said the record number of participants which increased year after year was proof of the event's popularity.

"As an incentive to our runners, we have increased the number of prizes this year with medals and prize money for up to the top 50 participants."

"Those who complete the run within a specified time also received pewter medals," he said at the closing ceremony.

Zainal also expressed confidence on the decision to restrict this year's event to Malaysians only was a welcome move.

"I am sure this decision will be welcomed by all as they know that they are competing on a level-playing field," he said.

R. Subramaniam, 26, Brittany Lim 31, and M. Ramakrishnan, 58, emerged champions of the Men's Senior, Women's Open and Men's Veteran 21km race, taking home the top prize of RM600 and a medal each.

Subramaniam was first to cross the finish line clocking 1:15.28s just several minutes ahead of second and third place winners Mohd Haffis Mansor and J. Vignaswaran.

"It was a tough run because part of the route was uphill but it was still enjoyable," said Subramaniam who came all the way from Singapore (where he works) to participate in the run.

Women's Open champion Lim may be petite but a strict training regimen and determination helped her finish top podium.

Limiting participation

Only 10,000 runners for Seremban Half Marathon next year



In huge numbers: Runners at the flag off of the Seremban Half Marathon.

The sales representative said her training schedule included running about 40km per week.

"I've participated in several marathons since going serious on competitions over a year ago. The daily training helped improve my speed and endurance," she said.

Hot on Lim's heels were SMK Seri Ampangan Seremban teacher Nurul Hidayah Nasir and Looi Mei Yan from Kuala Lumpur.

It was no surprise when M. Ramakrishnan bagged the Men's Veteran event. A familiar face on the local running circuit, Ramakrishnan was the winner of the Men's Senior Veteran (10km) category last year. He clocked 1:20.09s ahead of younger runners Kuan Mee Huat and Mohamad Omar.

Besides the three main categories, prizes were awarded to the top finishers in the Men's and Women's Senior, Men's and Women's Veteran, Men's and Women's Senior Veterans, Men's and Women's Juniors (all 10km).

As in previous years, the largest school contingent in the run was presented with a cash reward in recognition of the participants' efforts and initiative.

SMK Chan Wa were represented by about 2,600 students and took the top prize of RM1,000. SMK Bukit Mewah and SMK St Paul were next and received RM750 and RM500, respectively.

Antah Healthcare Group, one of the

sponsors, bagged the top three spots in the 5km corporate run while the best dressed team went to the Royale Bintang Resort & Spa Seremban.

The proceeds from the run would be channelled to the state's junior athletes development fund in support of new sporting talent.

The SHM was jointly organised by the Seremban Municipal Council (MPS), Antah HealthCare Group, Syarikat Pesaka Antah Sdn Bhd, the Seremban Hash House Harriers and the Negri Sembilan Amateur Athletics Association.

The major sponsors were Sunrise MCL Land Sdn Bhd (Forest Heights), Walton International Property Group

RESULTS

21km

Women: 1. Brittany Lim; 2. Nurul Hidayah Nasir; 3. Looi Mei Yan

Men's Senior: 1. R. Subramaniam; 2. Mohd Haffis Mansor; 3. J. Vignaswaran

Men's Veteran: 1. M. Ramakrishnan; 2. Kuan Mee Huat; 3. Mohamad Omar

10km

Women's Senior: 1. A. Amutha; 2. Seah Bee Lian; 3. Lee Sui Yan

Women's Veteran: 1. Lim Ai Lim; 2. Loke Khuan Mee; 3. Yee My Me

Women's Senior Veteran: 1. Lai Yook Ching; 2. Gun Siew Hong; 3. Clarena Khoo Su Leng

Men's Senior: 1. Mohd Syahidan Alias; 2. V. Kohilan; 3. Jothpal Singh

Men's Veteran: 1. M. Karmukilan; 2. Mohd Saiful Ahmad; 3. Daniel Tan

Men's Senior Veteran: 1. Wong Weng Seng; 2. C. Krishnasamy; 3. Chuah Seih Seng

Women's Junior: 1. Afina Azamin; 2. Chan Ker Xin; 3. Norfatin Ziehin

Men's Junior: 1. A. Thineswaran; 2. S. Dilip; 3. Mohamad Firdaus Abd Rashid

(M) Sdn Bhd, Tint-Shop (M) Sdn Bhd, Nestle Products Sdn Bhd (Milo), Bata Marketing Sdn Bhd and Southern Lion Sdn Bhd.

The event was co-sponsored by Kian Joo Can Factory Bhd, Sino Hua-An International Bhd, Royal Selangor International Sdn Bhd, Sports Toto (M) Sdn Bhd, Antah HealthCare Group, Delfi Marketing Sdn Bhd and Permais Sandilands while Syarikat Pesaka Antah Sdn Bhd and Antah Insurance Brokers Sdn Bhd were also multi-sponsors. *The Star* was the media sponsor.



Race for the disabled: Participants of the wheelchair race battling it out for the first prize during the marathon.