



Proud achievement: Tunku Nadia with her father Tunku Naquiyuddin after finishing the Women's Open 10km.

Running in memory of her grandfather

It was only natural for Tunku Nadia Sahiya Tunku Naquiyuddin to participate in the Seremban Half Marathon this year.

After all, the run was inception to celebrate the birthday of her grandfather, the late Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan Tuanku Ja'afar Tuanku Abdul Rahman.

The soft-spoken 30-year-old, who came in ninth in the Women's Open 10km, said she was glad to have finally participated in the race after being asked to by her father Tunku Naquiyuddin Tuanku Ja'afar over the years.

"Although I only began running competitively this year, my father has always encouraged me to participate in the SHM.

"I'm really glad I joined the race this year as it was extremely rewarding. It does not

matter if I come in first or 60th, completing a race is an achievement in itself," she said.

Since taking up running, the princess has participated in two other races — one in Petaling Jaya and the other in Singapore.

"I was pleasantly surprised by the SHM, it's a much nicer run. There is more breathing space and you don't have to push your way through the crowd," she said.

To prepare herself for races and to keep fit, Tunku Nadia runs three times a week at the Lake Gardens or the Taman Tun Dr Ismail park in Kuala Lumpur.

Waking up early to run is no problem as she often completes her training by 6.30am. She also enjoys futsal and along with some friends, have their own women's futsal team.



Leading the way: Tunku Naquiyuddin leading the pack in the VIP Run.



Girl power: Seremban Half Marathon Women's Junior winners. In first place was Ainur Shafiqah Azmi (centre), flanked by Farah Nadia Sulaiman (left) who came in second and S. Malar.



A job well done: Tunku Ampuan Najihah Tunku Besar Burhanuddin presenting the first prize to Seremban Half Marathon Women's Open 21km winner Foo.

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Seremban Half Marathon marks Silver Jubilee with joyful scenes and smiles

By C.S.NATHAN
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ONE of the oldest races in the country, the Seremban Half Marathon (SHM), which began in 1987 in honour of the then Yang di-Pertuan Besar Negri Sembilan Tuanku Ja'afar Tuanku Abdul Rahman, recently marked its Silver Jubilee.

More than 9,000 runners, amateurs and professionals alike participated in the run this year, which included the main 21km, a 10km run, special races for the disabled and a corporate fun run.

SHM royal patron Tunku Naquiyuddin Tuanku Ja'afar who flagged off the race at the crack of dawn on Sunday, said the organisers had upgraded technical aspects of the run to keep it on par with other internationally-sanctioned races.

"We introduced a timing chip to ensure that runners would be electronically timed, leaving little chance for error.

"In addition, runners were provided with running vests — courtesy of one of the sponsors," he said.

Since its inception, surplus funds from the SHM have always been channelled into the state's junior athletes fund and this year was no different.

"Apart from our annual contribution to athletics, squash and rugby, we are pleased to report that the young sailors whom we sponsored to the Qingdao Championship in China made us proud by emerging champions in the international category," said Tunku Naquiyuddin.

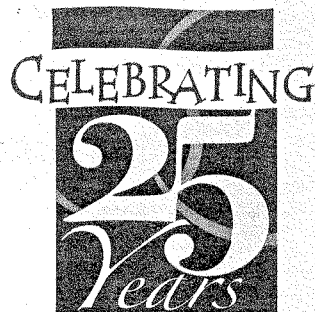
Armed Forces physical education trainer Muhamad Affindi Nudin and 19-year-old student Foo Bee Fon won the Men's and Women's Open categories respectively, bagging a medal and RM600 cash each.

Muhamad Affindi, who finished third in the same category several years ago, was thrilled with his victory this time.

"I signed up because it was the Silver Jubilee edition, I really didn't expect to win," he said.

For Foo, a former Malacca state badminton player, success was even sweeter as she had only just begun running seriously with her running club — Skyhawk Malacca.

"This is my first time at the SHM, maybe it's



beginner's luck.

"I only started running seriously in December. It's the encouragement from my club members that keeps me striving for the best," said the teenager who finished third in the recent Standard Chartered Kuala Lumpur Marathon.

In the Men's Veteran category, Penangite Khir Salleh emerged champion with a time of 1'21:36, trailed closely by Mohd Razali Mohd and Ahmad Daud Salleh Hud.

Kenyans, as usual, dominated the top spots of the International category with Kamau Cyrus Munyu clocking 1'09:14 followed by compatri-

ots Gichuhi Jesse Njoroge and David Makau Mutuku.

As in previous years, the run also attracts a large number of veteran runners in their 50s, 60s, 70s and even 80s.

This year, 58-year-old Lum Peck Yoong proved that age was no barrier and emerged third in the women's Senior 10km, clocking 49:57.

In the Men's 21km, 84-year-old Ryozo Mizutani from Japan was on cloud nine after finishing the race in just a little over three hours.

"It was so much fun...I liked it," said the cheerful octogenarian.

Besides the three main categories, prizes were awarded to the top finishers in the men's and women's senior veteran, women's junior veteran, and men's and women's junior 10km events.

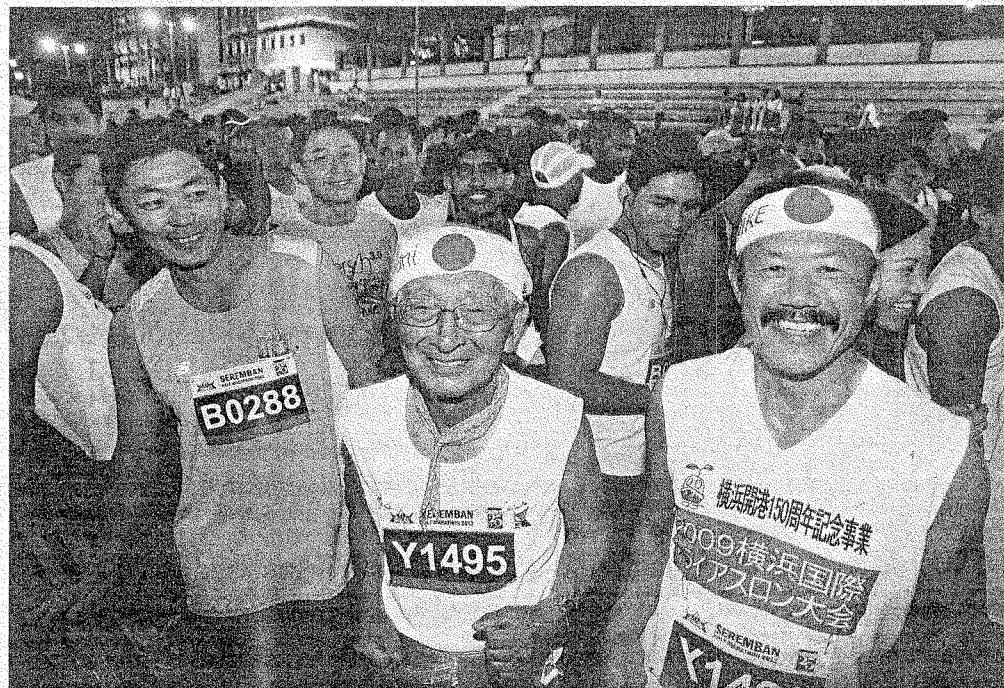
Cash prizes were also presented to schools with the largest contingents in recognition of the participants' efforts and initiative.

SMK Chan Wa took first place again with a team of over 2,000 students and was rewarded with RM2,000 while SMK Bukit Mewah and SMK St Paul received RM1,500 and RM1,000, respectively.

The SHM was jointly organised by the Seremban Municipal Council (MPS), the Antah Group and the Negri Sembilan Amateur Athletics Association.

The major sponsors were Sunrise MCL Land Sdn Bhd (Forest Heights), Tint Shop, Nestle Products, Bata Marketing, Sports Toto (M) and Antah HealthCare Group while the co-sponsors were Kian Joo Can Factory, Sino Hua-An International, Royal Selangor International, New Balance, Delfi Marketing and Orix Leasing Malaysia Bhd.

The Star was the media sponsor.



Nippon edge: The oldest participant Ryozo (centre), 84, from Japan with compatriot Yasunobo Koike (right).



All set: Participants in the disabled category getting ready for their race.

SEREMBAN HALF MARATHON WINNERS LIST

Women's Open 21km

- 1 Foo Bee Fon 1'36:38
- 2 Yee Pei Ni 1'45:15
- 3 Annie Lee Khum Chiew 1'47:43

Men's Open 21km

- 1 Muhamad Affindi Nudin 1'16:28
- 2 Muhaizar Mohamad 1'17:54
- 3 D. Vijayan 1'19:04

Men's Veteran 21km

- 1 Khir Salleh 1'21:36
- 2 Mohd Razali Mohd 1'29:06
- 3 Ahmad Daud Salleh Hud 1'36:01

Men's Open 21km (International)

- 1 Kamau Cyrus Munyu 1'09:14
- 2 Gichuhi Jesse Njoroge
- 3 David Makau Mutuku 1'17:21

Women's Open 10km

- 1 Chan Ker Xin 48:02
- 2 Lee Sui Yan 48:38
- 3 R. Naandani 49:18

Women's Junior 10km

- 1 Alexis Chee 45:04
- 2 Loke Khuan Mee 45:59
- 3 Heong Yoke Chun 46:14

Women's Senior 10km

- 1 Low Wah Leng 47:17
- 2 Ma Bin Chai @ Mah Ah Mooi 49:09
- 3 Lum Peck Yoong 49:57

Men's Open 10km

- 1 Rosnizam Rosli 32:05
- 2 Jenarthanan 32:53
- 3 S. Dilip 34:04

Men's Junior 10km

- 1 M. Thanasekaran 37:42
- 2 Yeap Yeap Thiam 39:52
- 3 Abu Hanifah Lim Abdullah

Men's Senior 10km

- 1 Tan Eng Huat 37:42
- 2 Tan Wah Sing 39:02
- 3 C. Krishnasamy 39:46

Men's Junior (school)

- 1 S. Siveshankaran 33:58
- 2 V. Royson 34:19
- 3 Cheng Jun Wen 34:43

Women's Junior (school)

- 1 Ainur Shafiqah Azmi 43:50
- 2 Farah Nadia Sulaiman 44:00
- 3 S. Malar 51:08