

THE SPAR WOMEN'S CHALLENGE

Prepared by: Bernice Porter, Kershney Naidoo and Marcelle Vermeulen

The SPAR Women's Race in association with Jacaranda 97.4 fm is held annually in Pretoria at the University of Pretoria sports grounds. To celebrate women's month, this race is one of the highlights in the month of August as it commemorates women in all their glory and essence! Men were welcome to join in the fun, as long as they dressed the part! There were four different race categories to choose from designed to suit everybody's fitness level, from the super fit to the "couch potato" - the 10km walk and run and the 5km walk or run respectively.

More than 15000 people joined in the race this year on Saturday 22 August. The SPAR challenge definitely brought woman (and men) from all different walks of life to compete on the same platform. The crowd of participants ranged from moms with kiddies in prams to senior citizens in wheelchairs aided by younger contenders. The atmosphere was indeed a festive one, many companies boasting branded T-shirts, balloons, banners, war-cries and songs of encouragement. The men were splendid sports and donned wigs, tutus, fairy wings, fishnets and hula skirts to fit the occasion! There were even some brave souls who attempted the race wearing their wife's high heels! Well done boys!!!

The R100 000 raised during this year's event went to support the Chrysalis Foundation, which is a non-profit organization that gives skills and development opportunities to traumatised girls and women living in places of safety or foster care. This organization restores the dignity and self esteem of these girls and women and transforms them into the proverbial butterflies they were always meant to be. The aim is to return them to the world, with a better future to look forward to, and as responsible and contributing members of society.

Several students and members of staff of FABI entered the race this year. Dressed in matching FABI T-shirts, the FABI presence was definitely a force to be reckoned with. Several of the FABI men were persuaded to dress to the occasion, allowing their alter egos to come out and play! Much fun was had by all! FABI students brandished balloons, letters on sticks, bubbles and songs to cheer on the participants. It was great for FABIans to interact with the public in an organized community event such as this. We were surely noticed, and had the opportunity to talk to many people about who we are and what we do, spreading the message of FUTURE FORESTS AND FOOD! Taking part in community projects such as this, once again makes us realize how truly fortunate we are, and we will definitely be taking part again next year, and in greater numbers! (Guys! Break out those fishnets!)



FABIans entering into the spirit of the SPAR Women's Challenge

