



Stephen is the fastest of them all!

By CHARLES BALOYI

MZANSI'S long-distance sensation Stephen Mokoka reigned supreme at the Bestmed Tuks Race at Tuks Stadium in Tshwane yesterday.

Mokoka became the first runner to win the new 42.2km marathon that has been added to the 10km and 21.1km races this year.

Mokoka, who is coached by Michael "Sponge" Seme, clocked 2:32:02 to comfortably finish ahead of his training partner Sikhumbuzo Seme (2:33:47).

The marathon is a qualifier for the Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon and the Comrades Marathon. A huge contingent of runners turned out to take part under very hot weather conditions.

Former Comrades Marathon champion Charne Bosman, who trains at Tuks, took the women's 42.2km title as she warmed up for the Two Oceans Marathon in Cape Town on 31 March.

The 42-year-old touched the ribbon in 2:50:57 with Ann Ashworth struggling and showing some tired legs in second place in 3:09:48.

Bosman will also run in the Comrades on 10 June. Three weeks ago, she won the women's 42.2km marathon at the Johnson Crane Hire Marathon in Benoni.

Mokoka and Bosman pocketed R3 500 for their effort in the 42.2km, but the sponsors have promised bigger prize money for next year.

Vuyokazi Gebe crossed the finish line first in the women's 21.1km registering 1:24:17, while Benedict Moeng of KMPG running club, defended his title in the men's 21.1km stopping the clock in 1:10:03. Milton Kekana of Tshwane University of Technology won the men's 10km title with the time of 30.48.

Mokoka's training partner Glenrose Xaba, who ran in the colours of Boxer running club, won the women's 10km clocking 34.56seconds ahead of Irvette van Zyl (35.02) and third place Lebo Phalula (35.16).

Mokoka said he was happy with his time as he used the race as part of his preparations for the IAAF World Half Marathon Championships in Valencia, Spain next month.

