**HARRY GWALA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

**“Together We Deliver and Grow”**

 **OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER**

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**HARRY GWALA DISTRICT MARATHON**

**MEDIA STATEMENT:**

02 April 2024

**A beautiful Harry Gwala District Marathon over the Easter weekend.**

The Harry Gwala District Municipality delivered a successful well-attended Harry Gwala District Marathon which is a Comrades Marathon qualifier, on the 31 March 2024 at Ixopo High School Sport Grounds.

About 500 runners participated in the marathon. The District Mayor Cllr Zamo Nxumalo participated in the 10 km. Harry Gwala District Municipality in partnership with uBuhlebezwe Local Municipality, uMzimkhulu Local Municipality, the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, Genius Athletic Club in hosting the Harry Gwala District Marathon.

The winners of the Harry Gwala marathon: 42.2km in the Men’s category, Mholi Jali (02:33:45), emerged triumphant, while from the women’s category the winner is Irine Ioritarency (02:58:49).

“It’s a great experience for me to win such a big race, I have participated in Harry Gwala Marathon before but have not done well. I think it helped to train and prepare myself accordingly. It is such a great honour winning this race at home as I am from uMzimkhulu. I now feel that I am ready for the Comrades Marathon, I will be running my first Comrade this year. I am very excited about winning this race,” said Jali.

The Harry Gwala Marathon which was up run from Umzimkhulu to Ixopo won by Jali, with Kabelo Lesia coming second in the male’s race.

One of the top performers in the Harry Gwala District Marathon, Nkosikhona Mhlakwana who came third in the 42km main race has attributed his good achievement to the Department`s Elite Athlete Development Programme (EADP) of which he is the part of. The Howick based athlete also came 11th in his very first Comrades Marathon in 2019. He has also got podium position in the two Oceans on twice. He says that his focus now is on doing even better in the comrades.

Muzi Fodo 10km wheelchairs was awarded a special award on this race by the District Mayor.

“I awarded Muzi Fodo a special Mayors award on this race for his participation in the 10km race on a wheelchair. What he achieved today should encourage all of us to be active and take part in such races and not make any excuses. I would like to congratulate all the winners today and everyone else that took the initiative to be part of this beautiful race. Indeed, we are hoping that as this race reaches its 10th year, that it grows, and that our athletes benefit from it and also local businesspeople,” said Mayor Nxumalo. Nxumalo said they hope the 2025 race will grow and be better.

**Top 3 results are as follows:**

**MALES 42.2km**

1. Mholi Jali
2. Kabelo Lesia
3. Nkosikhona Mhlakwana

**FEMALES 42.2km**

1. Irene Ioritarency
2. Sheila Saina
3. Monicah Jepkorir Mengich

**MALES 21.1km**

1. Lebenya Nkoka
2. Letlatsa Nape
3. Lehlohonolo Ralebetele

**FEMALES 21.1km**

1. Jenet Mbhele
2. Dekeledi Majara
3. Ntshangase Nokuthula

**MALES 10km**

1. Thabang Sekonyela
2. Tumelo Ralitabo
3. Tseliso Masiu

**FEMALES 10km**

1. Busisiwe Chamane
2. Malineo Mahloko
3. Banele Favourate Mabizela

**MALES 10km WALK**

1. Lucky Gumede
2. Vukani Mdunge
3. Ntokozo Majozi

**FEMALES 10km WALK**

1. Babongile Memela
2. Amahle Cebekhulu
3. Amahle Mzimba

**ISSUED BY HARRY GWALA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY COMMUNICATIONS UNIT.**

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