



# SAVAGES ATHLETIC CLUB

## THE CLEFT STICK

info@savagesac.co.za  
 www.savagesac.co.za  
 Phone: 078 281 6981  
 Fax: 086 562 5695

13/09/2009 - 3/10/2009



### Calling all Past Members

Savages has a rich history in having members who have at times been part of the success of the club. Should you have contact details of past members, specifically email addresses, please pass them onto us, so we can include them in the 50th Anniversary Celebration News.

### HOT NEWS

- **Reminder - Savages AGM - Wednesday - 30 September 2009.**
- Notices of the AGM have been distributed.
- For the travelers, there are details of a 100 miler in Amman in this issue
- Mont-Aux-Sources Challenge—this was completed by some of our members — Well done on this tremendous effort. see report
- Race Cancellations  
 Sugar Coast 21km—Tongaat Township to Township
- If you are thinking of entering the comrades, they are half way with the entries — Don't miss out

### Birthdays - Many Happy Returns

13/09	Douglas Kirton
15/09	Thembinkosi Buthelezi
16/09	Maxine Mechanicos Bob Pilditch
17/09	Christopher Akal
18/09	Zoe Buchan
20/09	Deidre Maree
24/09	David Lewington
26/09	Elias Mechanicos
27/09	Grant Wisby
28/09	Peter Larcombe
30/09	Ronnie Pienaar
01/10	Sibongile Cele
03/10	Robin Honneysett

### Savages 50<sup>TH</sup> Golden Jubilee Race

Savages proposes to host our event under the banner as above. Every effort is going to be made with this event to make it a special and memorable event on the road race calendar. We are looking for a sponsor for this race. If anyone has contacts or potential leads, please forward to [chairman@savagesac.co.za](mailto:chairman@savagesac.co.za)

### TT League Results 17th September @ PDAC

18	Susan May	Savages	F	S	19:59
23	Karen Geldard	Savages	F	S	20:22
39	Charmaine Bazley	Savages	F	V	22:49
88	Michelle Knott	Savages	F	V	31:09
142	Jim Stanton	Savages	M	S	42:01
143	Kevin Bradfield	Savages	M	V	42:27
151	George Lucey	Savages	M	V	58:54



## 1-ON-1 Computer Training

Wendy Schutte

wendyschutte@telkomsa.net  
 Cell: 084 517 0677 / Tel: 031-467 5293  
 53 Winchelsea Ave. Bluff, Durban, 4052

### Savages 50th Year Tog Bags New in Stock \*Limited Edition\* **R 195**



## The Savages Top 10

The aim of the TOP 10 is to show the fastest 10 male and female athletes over a specific distance in the Club for the current year. It is the 10 fastest athletes and not the 10 fastest times, an athlete can therefore not occupy two positions on the list. Therefore, if an athlete better his or her time, he or she will move up the log and lose the old time. So watch out, this is like a music Top 10 - It is running, it is changing and somebody out there wants to be on it. Do not sleep too easy!

### Men: 10km

Pos	Name	Time	Event
1	Ackim Mhlanzi	35.58	Savages 05/2009
2	Bheka Jiyane	39.47	Woodview 05/2009
3	Anthony Zaborowski	45'11	Forest Hills 07/2009
4	Raymond Meyer	45'12	Forest Hills 07/2009
5	Gary Roscoe	46'46	Forest Hills 07/2009
6	Haydn Bradfield	47'16	Forest Hills 07/2009
7	Zengele Msimela	54'04	Forest Hills 07/2009
8	Kevin Bradfield	57'39	Forest Hills 07/2009
9	Nandus Moolman	57'56	Forest Hills 07/2009
10	David Flood	58:06	Stonebridge 08/09

### Men: 21,1km

Pos	Name	Time	Event
1	Anthony Zaborowski	01:17:46	2 Oceans 2009
2	Filippo Faralla	01:27.08	Scottburgh 01/2009
3	Thembinotosi Buthelezi	01.39.06	Mondi 01/2009
4	Raymond Meyer	01.43.24	Scottburgh 01/2009
5	Brett Florens	01.44.36	Scottburgh 01/2009
6	Mbhakiseni Mchunu	01:46:06	Savages 05/2009
7	Elais Mechanicos	01.46.41	Scottburgh 01/2009
8	Gary Roscoe	01.47.00	Postnet 03/2009
9	Rob Small	01.47.44	Postnet 03/2009
10	Lourens Grobler	01:56:55	Savages 05/2009

### Men: 42,2km

Pos	Name	Time	Event
1	Nico Gey Van Pittius	03.31.23	Hillcrest 01/2009
2	Casper Kempen	03.36.10	Battlefields 01/2009
3	Elais Mechanicos	03.36.19	Midlands Meander 04/09
4	Thembinotosi Buthelezi	03.37.15	Postnet 03/2009
5	Christopher Mtshiliba	03.37.41	Postnet 03/2009
6	Brett Florens	03.37.59	Postnet 03/2009
7	Sishle Shangese	03.45.44	Hillcrest 01/2009
8	Boysie van Staden	03.53.14	Hillcrest 01/2009
9	Denis Khomo	03.55.11	Hillcrest 01/2009
10	Philip Tozer	03.57.34	Hillcrest 01/2009

### Women: 10km

Pos	Name	Time	Event
1	Makhosi Mhlongo	36.17	Spar 08/2009
2	Blanche Moila	43'26	Spar 08/2009
3	Zoe Buchan	45'37	Spar 08/2009
4	Wendy Rook	46'23	Spar 08/2009
5	Gail Babich	50:06	Spar 08/2009
6	Thandekile Sokhela	54'43	Spar 08/2009
7	Karen Geldard	55'01	Stonebridge 08/2009
8	Susan May	55.05	Forest Hill 07/2009
9	Naome Nxumalo	55'37	Spar 09/2009
10	Sarah Ward	57'44	Spar 08/2009

### Women: 21,1km

Pos	Name	Time	Event
1	Emma Watts	01:40:30	Stonebridge 08/09
2	Julie Carrol	01:48:07	Stonebridge 08/09
3	Zoe Buchan	01.49.47	Dick King 05/09
4	Jacqui Hadgingham	01.51.30	Scottburgh 01/2009
5	Claire Yunnie	01.58.04	Scottburgh 01/2009
6	Linda Scott	01:59:10	Savages 05/2009
7	Gisele Anderson	02.02.55	Scottburgh 01/2009
8	Bronwyn Logan	02:06:37	2 Oceans 2009
9	Yvonne Dalglish	02:08:04	Stonebridge 08/09
10	Charmaine Bazley	02:13.30	Sardine 07/2009

### Women: 42,2km

Pos	Name	Time	Event
1	Daniela Papini	03.37.00	Nedbank 02/09
2	Jaqueline Hadingham	03:57:00	Nedbank 02/09
3	Karen Geldard	04:05:00	Bufs 03/2009
4	Linda Scott	04.07.38	Postnet 03/2009
5	Pearl Spencely	04.10.00	Postnet 03/2009
6	Chippy Steel	04.18.09	Hillcrest 01/2009
7	Gisele Anderson	04.20.40	Midlands Meander 5/9
8	Nikki Pereira	04.36.33	Postnet 03/2009
9	Antoinette Seiler	04.37.21	Postnet 03/2009
10	Thandekile Sokhela	04.53.14	Midlands Meander 5/9

### SA Cross Country Champs in PTA held on 12th September 2009

Makhosi Mhlongo	12th overall and 3rd team receiving Bronze medal.
Monwabisis	18th overall and 2nd team receiving Silver medal
Sibusiso Madikizela	40th overall.
Blanche Moila	4th overall and 1st team receiving Gold medal.
Raymond Meyer	Race results were cancelled.

Well done to all, Cross Country Champs was better organized than last year and next year is going to be even better, so compete during next years events, I would like to see more Savages members going to SA.

# The Calendar: At a glance

More details can be obtained from  
<http://www.savagesac.co.za/webcalendar/>

## October 2009

Public Access

Category: All

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
W K 4 0					01	02	03
W K 4 1	04 06» South Coast marathon & half 07» Saints Thombree Challenge	05	06	07 18» Sports Zone Brooks TT League	08	09	10
W K 4 2	11 06» Sugar Coast 21 - Cancelled	12	13	14	15	16	17
W K 4 3	18 06» Chatsworth 21km	19	20	21	22	23	24 Tonevale Game Farm
W K 4 4	25 05:30» Township to Township - Cancelled	26	27	28	29	30	31

## November 2009

Public Access

Category: All

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
W K 4 5	01 06» Venk Pac Challenge	02	03	04	05	06	07
W K 4 6	08 06» Bluff 40+	09	10	11 18» Sports Zone Brooks TT League	12	13	14
W K 4 7	15 06» Stella Tribute	16	17	18	19	20	21
W K 4 8	22 06» Thompson Meats	23	24	25	26 18» Sports Zone Brooks TT League	27	28 06» Sani Stagger
W K 4 9	29 09» Heatonville 18km	30					

## Out and About



Ladies Masters Winning Team at SA Cross Country Champs in Pretoria

### Savages 50th Jubilee March 2010

At the end of March 2010, Savages celebrates its founding as a running club. We continue to gather history of the club from various sources. We appeal to those long serving members to have a look through your archives and send us your old club communications so that we can compile this into a current history book for future members.

## History of the Marathon

The name Marathon comes from the legend of Pheidippides, a Greek messenger. The legend states that he was sent from the town of Marathon to Athens to announce that the Persians had been defeated in the Battle of Marathon. It is said that he ran the entire distance without stopping and burst into the assembly, exclaiming "Νενικήκαμεν" (Nenikékamen, 'We have won.') before collapsing and dying.[3] The account of the run from Marathon to Athens first appears in Plutarch's On the Glory of Athens in the 1st century AD who quotes from Heraclides Ponticus's lost work, giving the runner's name as either Thersipus of Erchius or Eucles. Lucian of Samosata (2nd century AD) also gives the story but names the runner Philippides (not Pheidippides).

There is debate about the historical accuracy of this legend. The Greek historian Herodotus, the main source for the Greco-Persian Wars, mentions Pheidippides as the messenger who ran from Athens to Sparta asking for help, and then ran back, a distance of over 240 kilometres (150 mi) each way. In some Herodotus manuscripts the name of the runner between Athens and Sparta is given as Philippides. Herodotus makes no mention of a messenger sent from Marathon to Athens, and relates that the main part of the Athenian army, having already fought and won the grueling battle, and fearing a naval raid by the Persian fleet against an undefended Athens, marched quickly back from the battle to Athens, arriving the same day.

In 1876, Robert Browning wrote the poem "Pheidippides". Browning's poem, his composite story, became part of late-19th century popular culture and was accepted as a historic legend.



Off to Cape Town for the Peninsula Marathon on Saturday are the Savages team, from left, Frank Marshall, Bernie van Blerk, Don Colborne, Mike Walsh, Ackim Mhlanzi and Jonn Ward

# Proud athletics history from Savages

LAST week this column featured an article on Natal road running clubs and I was delighted to have Rob Latham from Savages Athletic Club visit me with a comprehensive history of the Savages Club.

Savages celebrated their silver jubilee year in 1985, so now in their 27th year I shall try and give you some of the interesting facts about one of Natal's most successful clubs.

The club was founded by Ian MacNab and Kenny Craig in 1960 and boasted a membership of only six. Now they are the largest running club in Natal with over 1 000 members.

They say that dedicated people always do the best job and there is no exception when it comes to chairmen who have served Savages members over the years.

In its 27 years of existence Gerry Treloar and Bobby Holland have between them served 14 years in the chair. Oddly enough it was Gerry who introduced me to road running.

Comrades Marathon successes are so many that it is impossible to list them all. Take the time however to study this year's Comrades programme to establish how many times Savages have won the Ganga Dui team prize.

Some of the really great Comrades runners from Savages were: Winners – Manie Kuhn and Dave Bagshaw.

Gold Medalists – Dave Box, Barry Gerber, Rob Ashworth, Dancing Dave Wright, Norman Wessels, Malcolm Ball, New Zealander John McBrearty, Derek Preiss, Clive Crawley, Ted Craig, Fritz Madel and Roland Davey.

Two Savages – Dave Box and later Derek Kay held the world 100 mile record.

Other well-known Savages who have come and gone are Dave Piper, Dudley Duck, Derrick May (who recently ran a 210 marathon in the USA), the late Ian Jardine, Peter Golding, Craig Hepburn, Graham Raubenheimer, Norman Bowler, John Cafeteiro, the late Charlie Warren and for a short spell British athlete Warwick Ewers.

The list is never ending, though let us not forget a present Savages and world class Springbok Blanche Mola. Other prominent women who have achieved for the club are Lisa Warren, Sue Skoet, Lolly Thomson, Cheryl Torr and Moira Hornby, to name but a few.

Certainly a club with a long and illustrious record which is cer-

tain to remain a dominant force in South African athletics.

**TONY TINGLE MEMORIAL**  
THE Umvoti Athletic Club in Greytown host the annual Tony Tingle Memorial Marathon starting at the Greytown Town Hall on March 15 at 06:00. The course offers a scenic circular route which will be a tester for Comrades runners. Usual prizes and a badge for all finishers will be available as will free coffee and buns at the start.

**NIGHT OWLS**  
THE Chiltern Half-marathon night race on Friday will start, 19h30, from the Durban/Westville University track.

**THE SA MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
THE Ohlsson's SA Marathon Championships will be held in Stel-

lenbosch on May 2. No decisions has yet been made by the NMRA on the composition of the teams that will travel down to the Cape, but they will be chosen after the Savages Marathon on March 22.

This will be the first championship which will include veteran women. It is the intention to send full teams in each category provided that there are enough qualified athletes.

The new qualifying times for coastal venues are as follows: Seniors: 2hr 30min; Veterans: 2hr 45min; Women: 3hr 20min; Veteran Women: 3hr 30min.

The Natal selectors have indicated their willingness to move away from the system of athletes having to run marathons for selection and have already announced that Willie Mtolo and Arther Lemos have been pre-selected for

the Natal team, subject only to proof of fitness.

This type of selection is common practice in many international teams and both these athletes came second in the SA Championships last year and were unlucky not to be winners in their various categories. Athletes interested in participating as individual entries must contact the NMRA by March 23.

**THE DE OLIVEIRA'S**  
I NOTICE that Eliot and Grace de Oliveira, who recently moved down to Cape Town from Natal, have wanted no time in making a good showing down there.

Eliot, now running for UCT, came third in the Constantia 10km race on Saturday in 30min 44sec, while Grace (Celtic Harriers) won the women's race in 35:50.

**Tony Abbott**



## Sunday, 30 May 2010 Entries currently received 7502

### CMA Launches 85th Anniversary

At a lavish launch function hosted by Montecasino in Johannesburg on Tuesday, 1 September (spring day), the Comrades Marathon Association unveiled its 2010 and 85th Anniversary plans.

One of the most important announcements was that of the special entry process to be followed for next years race. Anyone wanting to run next year will have to make up their mind very quickly, as to avoid disappointment, as next year will see for the first time in the marathons history entries being capped at 20,000 runners.

#### Comrades Marathon 2010 Entry & Qualifying Procedure

Phase 1: 1 September 2009 – Entries open to all previous Comrades Runners ONLY, and will close 31 October 2009. The total will be capped at 15 000 entrants. Please note that entries will close whichever figure or date is obtained first, ie: 15 000 entries received by 10 October, will see entries close.

Phase 2: 1 November 2009 entries open to all Novices ONLY and will close on 30 November 2009. This will be capped at 5000. Please note that entries will close whichever figure or date is obtained first, ie: 5 000 entries received by 10 November, will see entries close.

Qualifying period for 2010 will be as follows: 24 May 2009 to 26 April 2010

Runners who finished the 2009 Comrades Marathon can use their finishing time for 2010. As in 2009, runners were able to enter before they qualify. This means while all entries will have to meet the entry criteria above, runners will still be allowed to qualify in official qualifying races up until the month of April 2010, with the 26th April 2010 as the final cut-off date. Upon qualification, runners simply need to submit the time and details of the qualifying race through to the CMA office. Upon receiving the qualifying information the runner's entry will be confirmed.

2010 Running Club and License - All runners that enter the 2010 Comrades Marathon must submit their 2010 running club and running license to the CMA as soon as you have been issued this by your club. Failure to do so will result in your entry being rejected. Final date for this is 26 April 2010.

In line with the celebrations of the 85th Anniversary the CMA unveiled the new medal which will be awarded to all runners that complete the 89.17km course within the 12 hour time limit with a commemorative 50mm medal, which is the largest medal ever to be awarded to runners. The regular size medal is 30mm.

A new look and feel web site, [www.comrades.com](http://www.comrades.com) was unveiled, [www.comrades.com](http://www.comrades.com) is one of the most visited sports web sites in Southern Africa with in excess of 1.6 million views per month and on race day 24 May 2009, the site received over 2 million views.

The CMA announced a Celebrity and Comrades Legends Challenge.

Celebrities include individuals from other sports codes and the entertainment industries, thus showcasing that you don't have to be a talented or gifted athlete to be able to run and complete "The Ultimate Human Race." Celebrities and sports stars that have committed to the challenge include Kabelo, Kwaito Star, Ferdinand Rabie (Winner Big Brother SA), Asanda Siloti (Biggest looser SA runner up), Lungile Radu (VJ, Actor), Phumlani Dube (Sports presenter), Doug Watson, (KZN and SA A Cricketer), Ryan Sandes (Desert Runner), Garth Wright (Former Springbok scrumhalf)

Legends Challenge: The CMA has never forgotten the individuals that have competed in the Comrades Marathon over the years, and who have assisted in making the Comrades Marathon arguably the Greatest Ultra Marathon in the World. The CMA has identified these individuals and is in current discussions with these previous "Elite" athletes in them taking up the Challenge one more time, in order for them to have a chance at competing against each other and the rest of the 20,000 anticipated athletes lining up at the start in 2010. Legends include the likes of Shaun Meiklejohn, Bruce Fordyce, Willie Motolo and Andrew Kelehe to mention a few.

The celebrities and legends will all be running for the Comrades Amabeadibeadu Charity Campaign, which comprises of the Starfish Great Hearts Foundation, Wildlands Conservation Trust, The Sports Trust, Pink Ribbon and the Community Chest.

Another first for next year is that the race will a 'down-run', which in the history of the event there has never been 2 consecutive down runs.

Race Day : 30 May 2010

Start : City Hall in Pietermaritzburg at 05h30

Finish: Sahara Stadium Kingsmead in Durban at 17h30

Distance: 89km

Cut-off: 12 hours

Gary Boshoff, CEO CMA, "The 85th running of the Comrades Marathon is a race that any marathon runner cannot afford to miss."

Renee Jordaan, "Next years race provides for some unique challenges for the CMA but concrete plans have been laid and are in the process of being executed, and we can assure all competitors of a world class race day."



The 2009 Mont-Aux-Sources Challenge was held in the Royal Natal National Park on 12th September. This was the 17th running of the event, which started in 1993 as a small trail run in the berg and has grown into the country's premier mountain trail run, having been voted "best ultra-marathon" for the past 3 years in the annual Runners World poll.

The organisers deliberately call this event a Challenge rather than a race, to emphasis the participatory aspect of this event and to encourage all abilities to try it. The entry process is also structured to give as many people as possible the opportunity to experience this unique event. Unlike other mountain trail runs, a runner may only run for 3 years before the organisers allocate his or her entry to the next person on the waitlist. This ensures a fair system which sees interested runners waiting at most a year before being allocated an entry. Any Savages runners wishing to run next year should contact Kim Faure as soon as possible to get onto the waitlist for 2010. Her e-mail address is [montauxsources@yahoo.com](mailto:montauxsources@yahoo.com).

Runners are separated into 4 different starting batches based on recent marathon times. The batches start at 5 minute intervals to avoid congestion on the single track trail, which commences less than 500m from the start and continues up the Mahai valley for 10km until runners reach the Witsieshoek resort. After refuelling, runners proceed a further 10km along a climbing dirt road linking Witsieshoek with the Sentinel car park. At various points along this road runners are rewarded with fleeting glimpses of the dramatic views across the face of the amphitheatre. After climbing unrelentingly for 20km from an elevation of 1400m at the start, runners eventually arrive at the Sentinel car park at an altitude of 2800m where further refreshments prepare one for the final assault of the the amphitheatre.

From the car park, runners return to a single track, littered with rocks and loose boulders that challenges even the best trail runners' technical skills. This section is known as the zig-zags which aptly describes the trail as it hugs the steep slopes beneath the imposing Sentinel. However it is not the steep and rugged terrain that reduces most runners to a slow and labouring walk. This is the sole preserve of the dreaded altitude. Gasping for air most runners cannot believe that a slow walk in this rarefied atmosphere raises their heart rate to 90% of maximum. Without any running water in the streams (summer rains still a month away) and no water tables, thirst becomes a real concern as the dry high altitude air leaves runners parched. The trail eventually leads to the chain ladders, which propel the runners onto the top of the berg. From here runners follow the Tugela river (more like a little stream) to the edge of the escapement and one of the finest views of the berg. But it not yet time to descend. There's still one more climb to the top of the gully set against the mighty Sentinel. A quick glance at one's GPS confirms the high point of the challenge at 3100m.

The gully is a treacherous narrow, steep gap in the mountain littered with large boulders that offers a quick descent to the pathway leading back down to the Sentinel Car Park. To assist runners, a long rope the length of the gully (about 300m) is secured at regular intervals to offer something to hold onto. The veterans of this race know this section well and come prepared with gloves to avoid rope burn and using various techniques skip and jump from boulder to boulder down the gully. At the bottom of the gully the hard part of the race is finally over and those runners who have kept a little energy in reserve can now enjoy the rapid and often steep descent back down the mountain. However with still 20km to run, one needs more than energy to avoid walking. Strong quads and an eye for the rocks and other impediments along the trail are key to a strong finish.

Don't think that you can compare road times with Monty. The climbing and technicalities of the route see most runners taking 8 hours or more to complete this 50km challenge. An official cut-off is imposed at 10 hours and adjusted for the the staggered start. Savages had 5 members running and finishing this year out of a total of 261 finishers and close to 300 starters.

Filippo Faralla: 2nd overall / 1st veteran (5:37)  
Daniela Papini: 73rd overall / 16th lady (7:53)  
Gisele Anderson: 99th overall / 26th lady (8:15)  
Dave Lees: 154th overall (9:01)  
Jacqui Hadingham: 168th overall / 43rd lady (9:07)

The reward for completing the Challenge. A small piece of the berg. Each first time finisher receives a mounted piece of basalt, which is the hard volcanic rock found in the upper berg. 2nd and 3rd time finishes receive further wooden bases onto which their first year trophy is placed.

This is a magnificent event, with impeccable organisation, and all proceeds go to wildlife conservation within KZN, which makes this challenge all the more rewarding. There is no prize money, but for those brave enough to try this challenge, participating is reward enough. After Comrades, this is without doubt one of the toughest ultra's one can run, not to mention the scratches, scrapes and twisted ankles.

## AMMAN: THE 100 YEAR MARATHON THAT TREATS RUNNERS ROYALLY

Running International city marathons has always been a great way to mix a love of running with the desire to see some of the World's most interesting, scenic, historic or extraordinary places.

In most instances it's possible to plan well in advance, but now and again an event comes to light with features and opportunities that makes it one of those 'must-do' occasions. The **Amman International Marathon on Saturday 17 October 2009** is one such event!

It's not just that the marathon is special, or date is significant, or that there are so many worldly unique places to visit, or that the Jordanian hospitality is so good, but that it's also so easily affordable as the Royal Jordanian Airlines are offering marathoners and their families 35% off their cut prices for any direct flights into Amman. (Check destinations at [www.rj.com](http://www.rj.com).)

Although, Amman, the capital of Jordan, celebrates a relatively short one hundred years as a municipality, it is one of the World's oldest, constantly inhabited cities dating back to Neolithic times, around 8500BC.

The core of the two lap marathon route goes through the old city where much of the vast historic diversity is still visible. The many souks and bazaars ensure that the city centre bubbles with daily activity which will provide a rare but special atmosphere for all participants.

Both the marathon and 10km events commence from the modern Municipal Centre with a gradual climb to 3kms before relaxed downhill strides will take the participants through the market and old central city to the lower marathon turn round point. The next 6 km is a gradual incline back to the roman forum where marathoners will finish on the second lap.

Directly adjacent to the finish are two roman theatres, the largest of which, has a capacity of 6000 and will be used for the prize-giving.

A flat kilometre through the city centre completes the first lap.

To a large degree the long downhill from 3km to 14km balances out with the gradual return climb adding only a total of between 3 to 7 minutes to the times of three hours and five hour marathoners respectively. The 10km starts concurrently with the marathon turning off just after the 8 kilometre mark making it a fast predominately downhill event.

For those who have younger family members there's a 4km run that starts and finishes in the central forum area.

The expected overnight low of 8 degrees and midday high of 20 degree in October should result in almost ideal running conditions and the huge city centre crowd support will encourage even the most tired of runners through to the finish to receive their medal and share in the centennial celebrations.

A number of elite marathoners have already committed to the race which offers over 70000 dollars in prize money and should see the winner crossing the line in less than 2 hours 15 minutes.

Princess Dina Mired and Prince Firas Raad are members of the Amman International Marathon Board, and the race is held under the Patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein. It is not impossible that, come race day, runners will be sharing the road with members of the very popular royal family.

Clearly this is an event that attracts the support of the whole of Jordan and a race where visiting international runners of all standards are going to experience that very special warm Jordanian welcome: One could go as far as saying they are going to be treated 'royally'.

Those who fly in to the Queen Alia International Airport on race weekend will be met and transferred to the Race Head Quarters and Hotel. On Friday prior to the race there is a Pasta party where they will meet the Prince and Princess.

To assist spectator identification along the route the race numbers of International runners in both the 10km have special coloured backgrounds. All foreign runners are encouraged to wear their country name or flag on their vests.

In addition each overseas runner will also receive a specially designed Amman International Marathon golf shirt and tracksuit and a dedicated International Meet and Greet area has been allocated at the finish where the runners can recover to share their race experiences.

Of course running the marathon is only a portion of the experience; there's the history, legends and Jordan's worldly wonders to see before or after the race, and what better than to start than with a free city tour on the Friday prior to race day.

Not only will runners be able to drive part of the running course, and view the start and finish areas, but also the tour takes in the ancient Roman citadel on the highest of the original seven hills that the city was built on.

Each of the seven points of the star in the Jordanian flag represents one of the hills, and beside the Citadel, known as Jabal el Qala, is a church dating back to Byzantine times before 400 AD when the city was called Philadelphia. The citadel area, which has recently been refurbished, is currently scheduled to be re-opened on marathon night by His Majesty the King.

Over history several earthquakes and natural disasters destroyed the city which remained a small village until 1887 when it became a major stop on the Hejaz rail linking Damascus and Medina. This forms a major part of the regional travel for the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

In 1921 when King Abdullah 1 created the Emirate of Transjordan he commenced his reign from the old railway station, using a rail car as his office. Today modern and ancient Jordan stands cheek to jowl. It's a mix and match that replicates the melting pot of cultures that have contributed to the rich Jordanian heritage. From the original seven hills the city now extends over 19 hills with a population estimated to be over 2.5 million people.

If tours aren't your choice then visit the late King's large collection of cars at the Automobile Museum, or go beyond the city where there are many unique and world famous sites.

Just 50km and a 90 minute drive to the North West is the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth at more than 400 metres below sea-level. The mineral rich water provides so much buoyancy it is impossible to swim in, but the legendary healing and health-giving qualities attract many people to the luxurious spa and resorts along its edges. The Dead Sea mud and cosmetic products are famed for their skin cleansing powers throughout the world.

The area offers many religious sites including Mount Nebo, where according to the bible, Moses died and only a few kilometres from the Dead Sea, on the Jordan River, is where John baptized Jesus Christ. This is one of Jordan's most popular tourist locations and a place of immense religious interest irrespective of faith.

For historic architecture a visit to Jerash, considered one of the most important and best preserved Roman cities in the region, is a must or take a drive into the valley of Wadi Al Seer to see the Hellenistic ruin of Qsar al Abd, and no Jordan trip is complete without staring in awe at Petra, recognized as one of the seven Wonders of the World.

Take some time out to enjoy the beautiful beaches of the at Aqaba, a haven for suba diving enthusiasts. This is Jordan's only access to the Red Sea and provides a link to Egypt.

For the more adventurous a late afternoon jeep drive over the dunes in Wadi Rum will see the sun highlighting the beautiful and unique rock formations. If you listen carefully you can hear and see the charge of the camels as this was the venue for the filming of a number of scenes from the classic movie, Lawrence of Arabia.

Even this far west you are only a three to four hour drive from Amman.

In the other direction the lush fertile Jordan valley is home to vineyards and fruit farms.

Allowing two days for the marathon all of this can still be done at a leisurely pace in less than a week. It's truly an experience of a lifetime that can be centred around a run through the ages in the first Amman International Marathon, held to celebrate 100 years of Amman, on Saturday 17 October – the 100th year celebration will never happen again – so be part of it in 2009!

#### Amman International Marathon:



+962 6 566 2999



[www.amman-marathon.com](http://www.amman-marathon.com)

#### Tour Packages, Hotels and Marathon entry:

Moon Light Travel, Amman - Jordan

Tel: +962-6-4657507, email: [yolla.khoury@go.com.jo](mailto:yolla.khoury@go.com.jo) website: [www.yolla.com.jo](http://www.yolla.com.jo)