

Excitement builds for MTN OFM Classic as it celebrates 10 years

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The MTN OFM Classic is set for 07 November in Bloemfontein and celebrates the second year of MTN's involvement as the title sponsor of this cycle race. As in previous years, the MTN OFM Classic will be a 97km timed stage race, with a supporting 39km untimed fun ride. The MTN OFM Classic is a recognised seeding event for the Cape Argus Pick 'n Pay Cycle Tour 2011. Online entries for the MTN OFM Classic are open at mtncycling.co.za and will close on 25 October 2010.



Present at the MTN OFM Classic Media launch was Miranda Lusiba, PR manager Sponsorship at MTN SA; Mike Medupe, HR Manager at MTN Regional office Bloemfontein; Monica Naude, MTN OFM Classic race organiser and Rian van Heerden, OFM presenter.

According to Nick Efstathiou, Marketing Manager of OFM, "the MTN OFM Classic is the highlight of OFM's annual event calendar. Seeing our listeners and their families get on their bikes and spend quality time together with the sound of central South Africa; OFM, is a rewarding experience."

The media launch on Wednesday, 15 September, highlighted several important aspects of the MTN OFM Classic, namely: the history of central South Africa's biggest cycle race over the past ten years, the expectations from this year's race organisers, and the CSI initiatives of the race sponsors and partners.

"Of significance to MTN is the Qhubeka initiative, which raises funds for the donation of bicycles to children and caregivers in developing communities who have no transport. Children grow trees in return for the bicycles, and these trees are distributed and planted by project partners such as the Wildland's Conservation Trust," says Bernard Pieters, senior sponsorship manager at MTN South Africa.

Earlier this year, the MTN cycle race team, sporting MTN and Qhubeka race colours, participated in stage one of the Absa Cape Epic mountain bike race. Important to note is that Qhubeka bicycles are not merely handed over to communities - the Qhubeka non-profit organisation finances about 75% of the cost of the bicycle, while the recipient has to provide or earn the other 25% to give them a better sense of ownership and involvement.

Qhubeka's adult projects focus on providing people with micro-finance for bikes, developing community skills in maintaining the bicycles, and providing healthcare. Also, it focuses on enterprise development, environment and climate control, education and sport. Children earn their bikes by participating in community-based solutions to environmental issues and climate control. For example, children grow trees (treepreneurs) or remove litter or invader species (greenpreneurs) to earn their bikes.

"Community-focused initiatives such as Qhubeka have helped reinforce the fact that MTN is committed to cycling. As an ongoing sponsor of the MTN Energade Cycling team and various cycling events across South Africa, MTN is actively increasing awareness around the health and community benefits associated with cycling, both as a professional sport and as a community-based social activity. Now that's Ayoba!" says Pieters.

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