

Christmas gift as Sela Jepleting triumphs at Shoe4Africa

By [Emmanuel Barasa](#) 24 December - 14:02



SHOE4AFRICA founder (in white) issuing running shoes to young girls in THE SHOE4AFRICA 5km race in Iten. [Photo/ Emmanuel Barasa]

Months after competing at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 1,500m, Sela Jepleting won the ninth edition of Sho4Africa 5km road race in Iten, Elgeyo Marakwet County yesterday under the chilly morning in then high altitude.

Jepleting won the only women race that attracted world leading athletes among them double world cross country champion Viola Kibiwott, former world silver medalist Sylvia Kibet, who ran alongside her young sister Ivy Kibet among others.

The Kenya defence Forces (KDF) athlete proved that her Glasgow Commonwealth Games shows was no fluke as she blew away a classy line up from reigning Marrakech half marathon winner Eunice Chebichii, former world youth 3,000m Olympics gold medalist Gladys Chesir, little known Susan Tanui leading the park from the start to the 2km mark. But at 3km, the Uasin Gishu-born athlete struggled to keep up with the high speed and with 2km to the tape, she stepped two metres ahead, increasing her speed to win the race.

Jepleting who trains in Iten, having made the national team inter-continental championships in Morocco, exhibited top form to win the race easily. She left no chances as she fired her way to victory in 16:43:3 ahead of serial second placed Chebichii who checked in second after stopping the clock in 16:49:7 as Chesir sealed the podium places in 16:55:0.

Seasonal cross country runner Susan Tanui together with another local cross country runner Alicent Ruto came fourth and fifth clocking 17:02:3 and 17:04:8 respectively.

Angela Tanui, (17:09:6), another Kibet sibling Ivy Kibet (17:12:0), Esther Chemutai (17:16:8), Linet Jebet (17:18:6) and Rodah Jepkorir (17:24:7) complete the thin list of top ten winners in over one thousand competitors.

After the win, Jepleting said that she expects bumper 2015 world cross country championships in Guiyang, China.

“Though I struggled to win the race after I was tired competing on two surfaces, (murrum and tarmac road) but at 2km I realized that it was getting late for me to lead. So I struggled with my tiredness to win. This is the best preparations for the world cross country championships. I want to make into the team next year,” said the athlete who has competed to the course for the third time.

Race director Toby Tanser said that the race is good for the local community, who enjoys watching their young girls compete at home, siting reigning New York marathon winner Mary Keitany, two time world champion Ednah Kiplagat being the pioneers of the race.

“I always do this for the community. I came to Kenya as an athlete after retiring, I had to empower women through sports and sensitizing on the importance of education and health,” said Tanser adding that this year’s race is all about creating awareness to locals especially women on the importance of testing for HIV to know their status in the society.