

“On your marks, get ready... go!”

SEMAS Abacus

Maths – 5th National Competition

Rustenburg – Resembling able athletes, 446 thumbs and index fingers exit the blocks as they chase those numbers over beady hurdles on Japanese counting frames. This is brain athletics, a mental challenge for the brainy and the geniuses in the making. This is abacus maths, and this is SEMAS South Africa’s 5th National Competition.

On Saturday October 15th no less than 446 children between the ages of 4 and 10 years from all over South Africa took part in the 5th National Competition for Abacus Mathematics – A huge gathering indeed and a record attendance for SEMAS SA (Soroban Education Mental Arithmetic System) since their inception in 2005. Rustenburg was represented by 73 of its learners and achieved 15 top awards. Talitha du Preez (5) from Wysneusie was the youngest of our children and she achieved a gold medal.

Learners from the following schools also received top awards:

Lebone College: Champion of Champions (1st): Lesedi Tsitsi (Gr R) – Lesedi competed in a level with Gr1, Gr2 and Gr3 learners and achieved a mark in the top 10% of this whole group! We are so proud of him.

Other participants include: Chapion: Thatego Lefyedi (Gr R); Gold: Thhianeo

Gadisi (Gr R), Landa Matomane (Gr R), and Didintle Mogale (Gr R).

Laerskool Vastrap: Gold: Anri Heydeman (Gr R), Aiden van den Berg (Gr 1), Franco Beyl (Gr 1), Chris-Dian Haasbroek (Gr 2), Carli Venter (Gr 2) and Jana Geysler (Gr 3).

Laerskool Rustenburg: Gold: Gary Impey (Gr R) and Champion: Liam Odendaal (Gr2).

Laerskool Protea Park: Gold: Bradley Grobelaar (Gr 3)

Since its inception, SEMAS has grown exponentially. Presently there are 19 franchise areas countrywide, over 5 provinces, with students between 3 and 11 years old doing abacus maths with SEMAS. Not only does SEMAS significantly improve a child’s results in maths, but it also fosters a love of maths. And as we all know, when your hearts in it, the game is more than halfway won! “SEMAS teaches kids to ‘see’ maths,” says Marlene Ras. The abacus becomes part of the child’s daily reference and they learn to visualise the abacus in their minds. The abacus literally becomes like a built-in computer they’ll carry around in their heads for the rest of their lives as they become geniuses at mental arithmetic.

For more about SEMAS, go to the website www.semas.co.za.



Liam Odendaal – Champion Award (2nd) 87% (left) and Lesedi Tsitsi – Champion of Champions (1st) (right)

PAMA International nominated Rustenburg team: Back ftr: Anel Kruger (Gr 5), Regardt Mong (Gr 3), Arno Greyling (Gr 3), Justin Morgan (Gr 3), and Jaco Kruger (Gr 3). Middle ftr: Chane Henderson (Gr 2), Joane de Beer (Gr 2), Zenanke Vorster (Gr 1), Carli Venter (Gr 2), Jennifer Morgan (Gr 2), Letania McCarthy (Gr 2), and Anika Botha (Gr 2) Front ftr: Kevalin Pillay (Gr 1), Elke Botha (Gr R), Lesedi Tsitsi (Gr R), Liam Odendaal (Gr 2) Absent: Chris-Dian Haasbroek (Gr 2)