

KENYA : EDUCATION

MENYE LAIYOK / MAASAI OLYMPICS



Participants of the 2014 Maasai Olympics

THE SECOND MAASAI OLYMPICS WAS HELD IN 2014 THANKS TO A NUMBER OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING OUR LEAD SPONSOR: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S BIG CAT INITIATIVE.

DURING THE LEAD UP TO THE OLYMPICS FINAL, HELD DECEMBER 12, A SERIES OF SMALLER SPORTS COMPETITIONS (FOUR TEAM SELECTIONS AND SIX REGIONAL EVENTS) AND MEETINGS WERE HELD THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. THESE EVENTS NOT ONLY PREPARE WARRIORS/COMPETITORS FOR THE OLYMPICS FINALS, BUT ALSO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WILDLIFE CONSERVATION, SPECIFICALLY LIONS, AND THE RULES OF THE NEW WILDLIFE ACT.

THE MAASAI OLYMPICS FINAL WAS HUGELY SUCCESSFUL WITH ROUGHLY 1,500 PEOPLE FROM LOCAL COMMUNITIES, PARTNER NGOS, MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL GUESTS ATTENDING. PRIZES WERE DISTRIBUTED TO 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD PLACE WINNERS OF EACH

OF THE SIX CATEGORY EVENTS, AS WELL AS SPECIAL PRIZES THAT INCLUDED: A 'SAFARI' (SPONSORED BY MWCT) TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2015 NY MARATHON FOR THE 1ST PLACE WINNERS OF THE 800 M AND 5000 M RACES; A CONSERVATION AWARD (SPONSORED BY CHESTER ZOO) FOR THE MOST CONSERVATION INCLINED MANYATTA (OR, TEAM) WHICH WENT TOWARDS EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS; AND A PRIZE BREEDING BULL FOR THE OVERALL MANYATTA WINNER.

MAASAI OLYMPICS ATHLETES COMPETE FOR MEDALS, NOT LIONS, AND RECEIVED HUGE INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION. IT IS BIG LIFE'S HOPE TO HARNESS THIS SUCCESS AND BUILD AN INTERIM PROGRAM THAT WILL HELP PROMOTE CONSERVATION EDUCATION AND PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE TO LION HUNTING. MAASAI TRIBES HISTORICALLY IDENTIFY LEADERS AND DEMONSTRATE BRAVERY THROUGH LION HUNTS, BUT THERE ARE SIMPLY NOT ENOUGH LIONS LEFT FOR THE TRADITION TO CONTINUE.

FOR BACKGROUND ON THE MAASAI OLYMPICS, INCLUDING A LIST OF SPONSORS, PHOTOS, AND MORE PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.MAASAIOLYMPICS.COM

