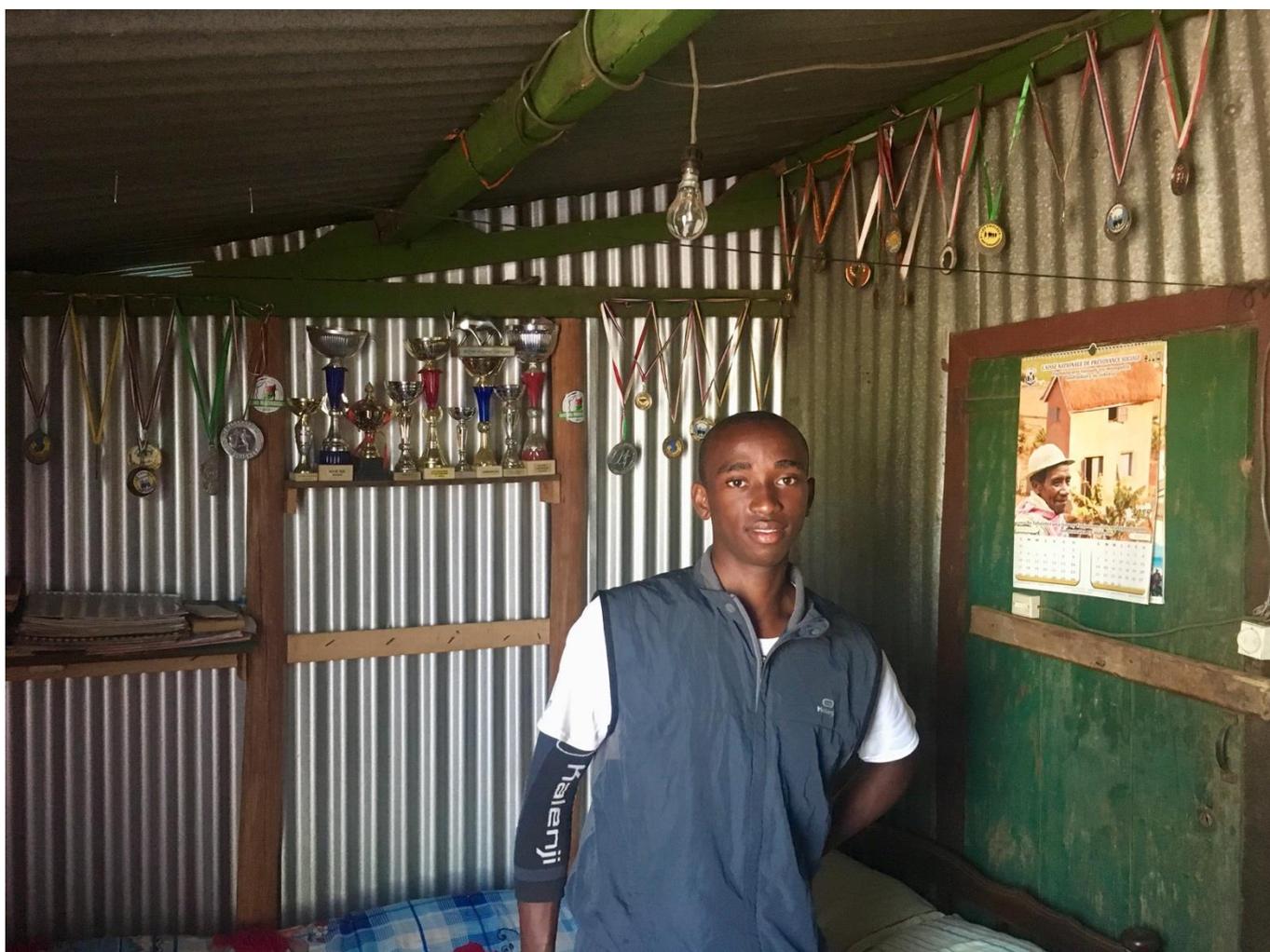


# Let's Trail be rewarding!

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## At the beginning...

My name is Jacques Justin, I'm 22 years old and was born in the northern region of Madagascar. My parents are humble farmers, grow our rice and vegetables in the bush far from the city. I grew up in my hometown Diego Suarez and started running short marathons, longer races in the region very early. My little tin-roof room along the streets outside the city is covered with medals and trophies I won since I'm 12 years. Running is my passion!



In July 2016, I heard from a multi stage race that would be launched in my northern region: RACING MADAGASCAR. Our regional athletic league spread out the information that a selection of local runners could participate for free. I managed to be on that list and was on the startline in July 2016 with 5 international runners from Argentina, South Africa, England, France, Macao and 20 malagasy athletes from several Leagues. That's how I met my friend Thabang Madiba, Salomon Team Southafrica, one of the top ten runners of South Africa. Racing Madagascar is a 6 days half sufficient trail race of 150km. None of us Malagasy was familiar with this format of race but we got inspired by the running techniques of Thabang and I managed to finish honorably just behind the southafrican champion in 11h15.15!

<https://www.racing-madagascar.com/trail-run-2016/>



## My second Racing Madagascar experience:

Madagascar trail run 2017 was held between the 11th and 16th of July 2017 and was full of twists! 28 runners at the start line of the trail run 2017, 26 finishers. This time Malagasy, Sweden, United States, Argentina, South Africa were mixed in a great ambiance. On that edition, I met my other southafrican friends: Christiaan and Landy Greyling. We shared another experience of that rewarding sport event. That time, the Malagasy athletes challenged the foreigners much better, I finished the race second just 5min behind my friend Hajanirina in 9h53.33!

<https://www.racing-madagascar.com/trail-run-2017/>



**Rija Gerard | Madagascar Ultra Trail 2017**



**Rija Gerard | Madagascar Ultra Trail 2017**

## The South African Adventure:

Trailrunning became my favourite sport after these experiences. Patrice Raoull and Sonja Gottlebe from Racing Madagascar, promised me that they'll try to get me on an international Race outside Madagascar when possible. So, in December I applied for my first biometric Malagasy Passport in Diego Suarez, my whole family participated at the cost! The Greyling's managed to get me registered on the Old Mutual Two Ocean Marathon through their sponsor Garmin. At the very last minute, the Racing Team got the answer from Airlink and SouthAfrican Airways that my flights are sponsored from Antananarivo to Cape Town. It was pretty late to apply for a Visa at the SA Embassy, I needed to travel by plane from the North to the Capital, our National Road was just badly destroyed by a strong cyclone. Njaka, from Asisten, recommended me to the Embassy, I got the Visa in 3 days!

How exciting to take the plane first time, leave the island, discover the continent that is so close but so far the same time! Everything is new to me: meal tray in a plane, escalators, foreign languages, huge airport...



Thanks to Thabang Madiba who left his work to join me at the arrival and guided me to the other Terminal! Without him, I would have been struggling to find my way and to check-in to the next flight to Cape Town! My little english dictionary never left my bag, Patrice & Sonja came to fetch me after that last flight, I sat in the front of a “Uber”, on the wrong side of the car and learned what seat belt is.



The next two days, things became more serious: we had to register, collect timing chip, t-shirt... in the middle of thousands of runners from many countries. Patrice guided me through, thanks to Njaka from Asisten, we bought my first new running shoes and 3 pair of socks on the Salomon stand! First time in my life, I only got second hand equipments before! These are the same that wears Thabang Madiba, they will make me run fast!



So, on Good Friday 30rd march, the Two Ocean Trail of 24km will start early in the morning, I'm ready! My excitement is huge, I saw so many new things in the last couple of days, I've the sensation to be on another planet. Patrice and I take an early morning Uber to UCT startline. It's dark, cold and raining! Christiaan Greyling brought me a raincoat and we both were in the first group on the startline. In my town Diego, we never experience cold, slippery trails, and climbs comparable to the slopes of Table Mountain and Devil's Peak. So, I decided to run like the other first 15 runners, same speed, same rhythm, if they know, I can do it.



After 1h, unfortunately I had cramps and couldn't run anymore, the cold, lack of preparation, food, tiredness...I was in the group of the first 5 runners and overtaken by many right now! Christiaan stopped and gave me some "magical" powder I don't know, I was better immediately and started to run again. I never heard about those who won that 24km Trail run: Reilly and Mackenzie, because I know nobody here. But I'm proud that despite my difficulties I managed to finish 9<sup>th</sup> among 400 runners!

the world's most beautiful marathon Two Oceans Race Administration System, Version 5.7.042

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**2018 Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon : Madagascar**

Name	Gender	Age	Ultras	Halfs	Race	Race No	Start	10-18 km	28 km	42 km	50 km	Finish	Position	Note
1 <a href="#">JACQUIS JUSTIN RAKIKY ANTILAHIFENO</a>	Male	21			Trail (Long)	58728	00:01:23					02:16:06		

Search again 1



**Provisional Result Certificate**

Event **2018 Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon**  
 Race **Long Trail Run (24 km)**  
 Date **Friday 30 March 2018**

Name **JACQUIS JUSTIN RAKIKY ANTILAHIFENO**  
 Country **Madagascar (MDG)**  
 Gender **Male**

Start Time **00:01:23**  
 Finish Time **02:16:06**



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**2018 Old Mutual Two Oceans Marathon : Male**

	Name	Gender	Age	Ult
1	<a href="#">GIVEMORE MUDZINGANYAMA</a>	Male	28	
2	<a href="#">NICHOLAS RUPANGA</a>	Male	43	
3	<a href="#">DANIE CRONJE</a>	Male	31	
4	<a href="#">TRANQUIL GUMBO</a>	Male	26	
5	<a href="#">LUCKY MIYA</a>	Male	37	
6	<a href="#">JONATHAN BLACK</a>	Male	23	
7	<a href="#">CHRISTIAAN GREYLING</a>	Male	33	
8	<a href="#">PIERRE DE VILLIERS</a>	Male	57	
9	<a href="#">JACQUIS JUSTIN RAKIKY ANTILAHIFENO</a>	Male	21	
10	<a href="#">MICHAEL JOHN DAVIDSON</a>	Male	40	

I got my most beautiful medal, in this beautiful city of Cape Town! We went out that night because Patrice, Sonja & Cedric from Racing Madagascar wanted to show me a little bit of the town. I discovered incredible things like many escalators, lifts in the V&A shopping Centre, the big harbor, street artists, huge artificial animals and lots of food !





## I have a dream:

This southafrican adventure finished already the 31<sup>st</sup>, I spent the 4 most exciting days of my life! Back to Malagasy reality: it took me 3 days and 3 different Taxi Brousse to reach the North of Madagascar. Back to my little tin-roof room, one medal more to hang on the wall...

My dream is, that I get another chance to experience International Trail Races in South Africa.

My dream is: this life changing experience will change my life for real!

My dream is, that my athletes fellows from Diego Suarez and all over Madagascar can also have that chance.

My wish is, that Sport gets more consideration and support from our politicians!

