

Bar One wants to challenge you to be its man

Second instalment of gruelling show is calling for team players

KEVIN RITCHIE

IT'S AN iconic brand, with a unique pay-off line – and now it's about to become synonymous with the richest prize in local reality TV.

Bar One, produced by chocolate makers Nestlé, is to bankroll another reality TV series this year, with prizes of more than R1 million – cash, a Harley Davidson motorbike and an overseas holiday among them.

The second search for the Bar One Man will once again be a winner-takes-all format, a

blend of the globally successful reality shows *Survivor*, *Fear Factor* and the *Amazing Race*, but with its roots in a combination of the quintessentially SA Camel Adventure series and the Castle pub tour.

It's a reality show that grew out of an ad campaign that was spawned by a payoff line. The chocolate for a 25-hour day became a tongue-in-cheek ad campaign with a man's man doing heroic things with lashings of good humour and self-deprecation.

The organisers are looking for someone who's tough and determined, but not so macho that he won't help his wife do the dishes after dinner; someone who'll win with character, looking after the stragglers and not knifing his mates in the back on the way to the top.

Or in Nestlé confectionery manager Roman Tiefa's words, "it will not only be about adventure, adrenalin, muscles and

fitness, but integrity and friendship".

The winner of the inaugural series, Clint de Beer, fits the bill to a T. So well, in fact, that he was hired almost immediately to work on a second instalment of the series.

He was ready to give up as the team started summiting Kilimanjaro as one of their tasks. "I said, 'that's it, I can't do it, I can go any further'. I thought I was going to die. The other guys rallied around me and that was the turning point for me. Eleven of us attempted the summit, and we all made it.

We said no one's being left behind and we did it."

Most amateur climbers train for months before attempting to summit Africa's highest peak, but the team were given their boots the day before they flew to Tanzania.

It wasn't just the 11 who made it. Executive producer Francois van Wyk, his 16-man team and host Ursula Stapelfeldt Chikane made it up there too.

"You start at 11 at night," De Beer remembers. "It's -20°C and there's frozen snow pelting you in the face... and it burns."

And then there's the altitude sickness, not to mention the galling sight of Kilimanjaro's porters haring up and down the mountain carrying everyone's kit, shod in flip flops or battered takkies.

The challenges, though, don't just test physical toughness; they test fear of heights too – from skydiving to jumping into your partner's arms



PREPARE TO SKYDIVE: Clint de Beer, above centre, winner of the first series, is challenging the men of SA to prove their courage and stamina on the next Bar One Man reality show.

over the Victoria Falls, as well as organisational skills.

"We held a party on top of the SABC building during the last series. It was a great success – and the first and probably the last time anyone will be able to do it," he laughs. They had to cater for the function, act as barmen, organise the entertainment and bus the tables for celebrities who were then roped in to judge them at the end of the challenge.

There was also camel racing in Dubai, sand surfing, scuba diving and travel to the United Arab Emirates, Zambia, Tanzania and the Seychelles.

De Beer still can't believe his luck. "I was blessed to be

selected and even more blessed to win."

He puts it down to the fact he was older than everyone else. "I was 34, they called me dad," he says. "I was focused; I knew I wanted to win the R500 000 cash prize and all the rest of the prizes. I needed to win it."

De Beer claims any averagely fit South African can do the challenge.

It's a myth. He's supremely fit himself. He went up against professional rugby players and Iron Man triathletes and beat them. He doesn't remember it like that. "Those guys were better than me, they were monsters, but the show is designed for all-rounders."

Short and wiry, with piercing eyes, he looks like a typical Parabat corporal in the old SADF. He's humble too.

When he says his wife calls the shots at home, you believe him, because he's got the humility that comes with being supremely physically adept and able to handle yourself in any situation. It's an awareness that sits lightly on his shoulders because he's got nothing left to prove to anyone anymore, or himself.

It wasn't always like that. De Beer grew up in Mondeor in the south of Joburg, traditionally a tough place where the kids learn to look after themselves and grow up fast in the

process. De Beer ventured into mixed martial arts after training in karate as a kid.

He got married at the age of 28, moving to the West Rand with his wife Simone, and then he let himself go.

One day he decided to start training again. Soon he was training six times a week, and then he heard the ad on radio.

"It was like a calling," he says. So he answered the call by applying as one of the 6 000 who did and then being selected as one of the 16 competitors for the initial competition.

Today he runs a corporate gifts company, serving mostly the banking sector, with his brother-in-law, but he's also



A LONG DROP: Host Ursula Stapelfeldt Chikane, centre, takes a leap of faith.



TOUGH TASKS: Contestants will be tested to the limit in the Bar One Man adventure.

been heavily involved with the planning and execution of the second Bar One Manhunt.

The competition is open to anyone between 18 and 40 with a valid passport and a driver's licence. If they make selection, they've got to be prepared to go into an initial lockdown at Thabo Morula, the outdoor adventure camp between Brits and Rustenburg that will be their home base for three and half weeks.

If they get that far, they're looking at adventures across SA, Zanzibar, the US and even China – and prizes.

Viewers can look forward to twice the value too, with the slot being doubled in time to

almost an hour on SABC3 every Wednesday between 8pm and 9pm, with rebroadcasts on Saturdays between 5pm and 6pm between May and June.

Chancers and loners shouldn't apply, warns De Beer.

"You've got to be honest. You've got to be a team player and you've got to connect with the audience. If you're not any of the three you'll be caught out and you'll pay the price by being voted off.

"You have to be committed. Take leave or quit your job. Make a decision that you're in it to win it, but most of all, humble yourself, win or lose!

"It's the experience of a lifetime."