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## Record 571 people with special needs take part in inclusive run



Poo Jia Ming, eight, from the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore School, with "Spider-Man" Neyton Tan, taking part in this year's Run For Inclusion, where athletes with disabilities run alongside the able-bodied. ST PHOTO: TIMOTHY DAVID



Venessa Lee (mailto:venessal@sph.com.sg)

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More than 2,000 runners flocked to Bishan Stadium and Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park yesterday - and faced greater issues than just the heat.

They were taking part in this year's Run For Inclusion, Singapore's annual running event where athletes with disabilities can run alongside the able-bodied.

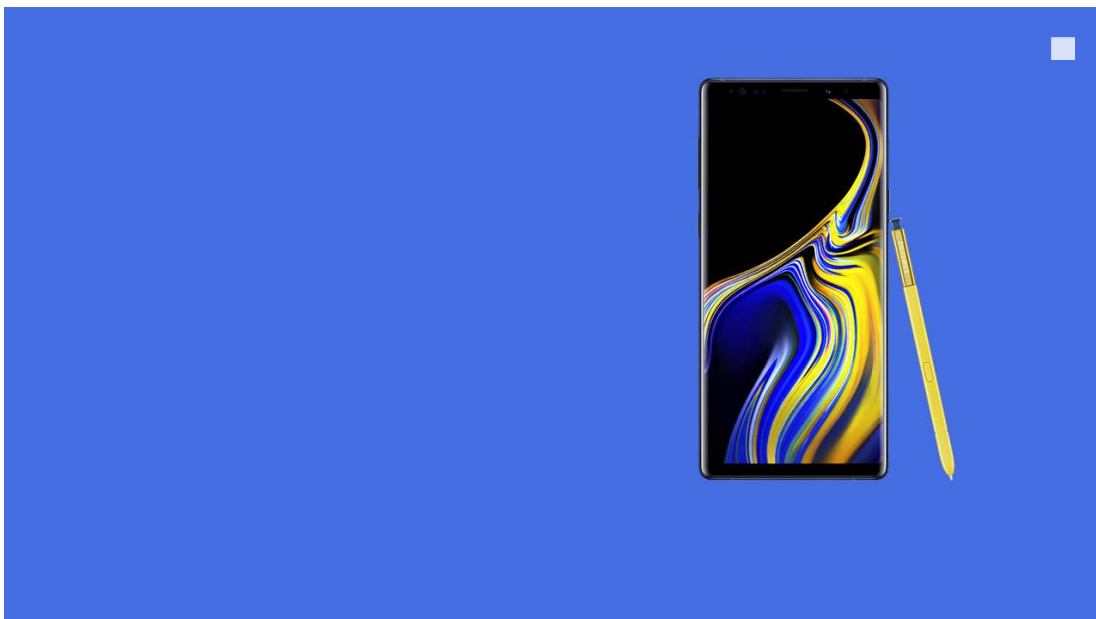
Among the participants was 27-year-old student Wong Ren Yi, who experienced what it would be like to run as a person with cerebral palsy in one challenge and as someone who is hearing-impaired in another during a new "empathy run" segment.

Runners encountered uneven terrain and were given earplugs to simulate the problems that such people would face.

Mr Wong, an automotive engineering student at the Institute of Technical Education who suffers from mild autism, was taking part in his third Run For Inclusion.

He said: "It's interesting to understand those experiences. I also like to run together with my friends."

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The event also featured an "autism challenge", where participants had to walk or run through a sensory tunnel filled with bright lights and sounds - showing how people with autism may be sensitive to sensory overload.

A record 571 people with special needs took part in this year's event, and 295 caregivers also took part. There were three runs, in distances of 12km, 6km and 3.5km.

Guest of honour was Ms Denise Phua, Mayor of Central Singapore CDC and Member of Parliament for Jalan Besar GRC, who flagged off the event. The Run for Inclusion has been held since 2015.

**Venessa Lee**

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