



**Copenhagen World half-marathon
Championship on Saturday 29 March 2014**

Short race = Short update?...Not this time. A participation to the World half-marathon Championships deserved a little longer :)

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Copenhagen World half-marathon Championships took place on Saturday 29 March 2014. Third race of the year, first important half-marathon, participating to a World Championship (Open race)...this was a one-in-a-life-time experience! (and a fast one!)

New PB: **1:24:59, 2minutes 41seconds** faster than Paris in March 2013 (two weeks before). Completed the race with a 126th place among women and 9th in my age category. Finishing 1,215 of 27,220 runners was a great achievement too!

What was the plan? Being the main half-marathon race for this year and final preparation for Rotterdam marathon, a definite focus on testing the strength and form. But although trying to get closest as possible to 1:26 (well, first under 1:27 and then closest to 1:26...). Of course, the participation to the World Half-Marathon Championships from within had a great boost effect! Plan well-executed and above expectations :) Double chocolate topping on chocolate cake? Definitely!

Saturday started strangely enough pretty early as woke up not feeling too well around 3:00am. Able to sleep again, woke up with a nice sun shine and still a lot of time before the race start. Light breakfast at 8am and back to bed for some reading. Chilling out a bit (OK, maybe I should have gone for a light run to get the body awoken and ready for the race...noted for next time!) and by 11:30am was ready to go to the start.

The race was starting at 12:55pm BUT being the World championships, I did not want to miss the opening ceremony (this is not everyday I can attend to such event...). Reaching the start area right before the ceremony, time for some pictures, checking out the elite men warming up (because they did have space for doing this...). Took a loooooong walk/jog to drop my bag and then jogged back to the start area where my corral was, passing by the massive crowd awaiting in the later corral (30.000 registered runners for the open race...it needs space for waiting for the start...). Reaching the start I could see the elite women getting ready and OFF they went. So beautiful start (and so fast!). 25 minutes of wait before the elite men and open race got started. This was like being a sardine in a can...with way too many sardines all around! Impossible to warmup. Was surrounded by giants in red (Danish and Norwegian colours...) and was there with my little white singlet in the middle. No warm-up possible apart from jumping up&down, being careful not to stand on others feet... Smiles right, smiles left and off we went...Well, the elite men started... it took 38 long seconds for me to pass the starting line.

The first km was fast, very fast, crazy fast...but still with so many people and so little place... did not feel pushed too much so (gentlemen manners maybe?). Passing the second km way too fast, but the effort did not feel much, so skipped thinking of the pace and just ran ran and ran more. Smiling (I think?). Passing the 5km, I noted a pace difference between my watch and the official distance...meaning I had to keep a 3:58min/km pace on my watch for an official 4:02min/km... which was still WAY faster than planned and would give a 1hr25min race... Still continued. No problem with my gel this time, I had it firmly in my hand and took it at km9.1.

Passed a few gals on the way and after that, used fully the tall men running slightly ahead of me as wind-shield. Not much wind, but enough for noticing the difference when running behind them. Sure it made me slowing down a bit, but better this and keeping some strengths for the rest of the race. The 10km-mark was passed in 40:12, which is my 3rd best time ever on this distance...thinking a bit by then that “yes, it was nice to have run that fast for the first half, but the 2 other times I ran that fast it was for...a 10km distance... I still had a bit left to the finish line...”

No worries, just keeping up the pace. A little deep in the pace between km10 and 15, although passing km15 was still making me good for a 1:25:xx finish. One of the best part of the race arrived a little before km18. Fredriksberg allé... Danish flags on both sides of the road... talk about a World Championships atmosphere!!! People cheering as in London or Berlin Marathon.. This felt so great and gave a terrific energy boost from this time on. Let a lady pass me but aimed for winning as many places as possible until the end (i.e. had to pass lots of guys...). Encouraging right, smiling left, this was a real acceleration I felt from the feet wanting to fly on the road. If in Paris this started around km19 or so, here it was 1,5km earlier it started. The brain thought quickly that it would not be wise to speed up so early, but surely the legs did not want to listen! Did not see really km19, was all focused on seeing the Hard Rock Café I was in the day before the race, as it was a few 100m before km20... Could not see it at all...started to feel a bit disappointed... and THEN it was just there...and gone...I was at km20 and turned towards the final 1.1km.

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More strengths found, more strengths used, probably shouting a bit at this time as well, but who cares really? :)

Had run the final stretch the day before and it was good to have this in the mind. Turning right at the km21-mark and saw the clock ticking up, passing 1:25... so best choice was to push to max on this short-but-so-long final 100m aaaaaand...it was finished! The race was finished. Looking right, looking left. Yes, it WAS finished!

Quicky checking my watch...that stopped at 1:24:59!!! Yippie! Or what? Under 1:25? really? The Swedish gal right after me got slightly under 1:26 so I was guaranteed a gross time of 1:25:xx...which was already way below my expectations or thought of what could be done... this year!

Could even assist to the medal ceremony of the elite women (who were glowing, smiling and so really impressive!) and then aimed to get my medal, food and my bag. Thereafter chilling out a short bit and meeting a friend for celebrating our participation to the World Half-Marathon Championships... probably first and last participation, but seriously.. with this weather (sun shine all the way), this ambiance, this result... that makes all the early runs, the long prehab sessions, the tough hilly workouts in the rain and the long runs in the snow or stormy weather...SO WORTH IT!

Official net time: **1:24:58**– received when I got back my bag. Even more happy!!

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>> Many thanks for keeping up with the kind words of support throughout the training...This is the preparation that makes this race what it became. Greatest half-marathon experience ever! Under the Danish sun :)

Have a great week!

//Kind regards from another nice and sun-shining place on Earth (aka Gothenburg!)

Karima

>justrunningaround<