



**Semi de Paris half marathon
Sunday 2 March 2014**

Short race = Short update... From Karima

Semi de Paris half marathon took place on Sunday 2 March 2014. Nice to run the second race of the year after a bit of travelling, great sun shining and a very fast ending :)

New PB: 1:27:39, 16 seconds faster than Helsingör in November 2013. Completed the race with a 26th place among women and 21st in my category (Senior women). Finishing 1,059 of 32,912 runners was a nice achievement too!

The plan for this race was pretty simple: take it as a long run, test what can be tested and enjoy. To complete it with a new PB is the chocolate topping on the chocolate cake ;)

Sunday started pretty early with the clock showing 3:00am (the nap from Saturday afternoon was probably to blame...). Then up for light breakfast at 6am and then started to get ready around 7:20am. Living close to the start/arrival area, I left a little less than an hour before the start signal (!), light jog through the park and then joining the mass of runners who popped up on this lovely and sunny Sunday morning. A bit short on time to get to my corral meant no warm-up before the race. A bit of chat with the French guys around and off we went.

Music in the ears, the first km is often a lot of pushing, but this year was a bit better. Got it done 14seconds faster than last year... Planned to settle into comfortable pace by km5, which I did. Really enjoying the sunshine and the run, I incendentally dropped my gel on the way to km5, which made me change my energy intake plan... meaning: taking what is served on the route...

Towards km10, the only real challenge is the uphill from km8, but knowing it is there, I took it nicely and with a smile, passing by lots of runners (this is why it is good to know it is there... because last year I missed it...even though I knew it was there!). Thereafter nice downhill and reaching the sides of the Seine a headwind joined us as well. On this part, there is very few spectators, so a little boring. But the view of Notre Dame under a morning Sunday sun is really worth it (even thought at this point that I should have taken my mobile for taking pictures...). Tried to take the back of other runners as wind shield, but not many runners around by this point. Km10 I took two cups of Powerade, the first one went down fine and the other one left the hands and face a bit sticky... what are they thinking really? A bottle would have been better!

The second half starts really when turning back around km13. The street is a little dark and then it is flat and I tried to keep the same pace which I had so far (4:06/07), but by then the legs did not want to push really (and it was not the plan either). Not really tired, reaching km15 a little slower than planned, the dreadful km16-17 arrived. Slowest ever for the race (4:20 – uphill) it however brings us to Place Felix Eboué and from there it is not much left. Accelerated to km18 (I had been practising the day before from home to km17 and then km18-19-20 to the end). So at least I was well-prepared! Km19 felt a little heavy, but the end was so closed that I saw myself accelerating and passing other fellow runners, looking as surprised as I was to pass them... Clocking km20, it was only the final line to go. Definitely found some hidden energy to complete the final km in 3:50 and then ... the race was finished. Might not be smiling on the pictures (I have to check...) but probably have to train smile + extra speed :)

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Surely a liiiittle disappointed not to be under 1:27, although this was not the objective. Had the possibility to test running in a controlled way (i.e. Not “all in” from start and accelerate afterwards ;)), could also try to use the energy drink from the race and get a real rocket-pace at the end (which is really fun!). Although have to recognize that giving blood 2 weeks before a race might be a good action, but not too good for the training. So better timing requested for next blood-giving!

After that there was a massage (where I won for the second year in a row the “first woman in the massage tent”-place :) and chilling out the rest of the afternoon before flying back home...which took an eternity and got me in my bed at 2:00am on Monday morning...

Official net time: **1:27:39** – received when I got back home.
Happy then!

>> Thanks for all the words of support throughout the training and the race and the after-race! This was a very nice *long run* done under a great Parisian sun!

Have a great week!

//Kind regards from another little sunshining place on Earth (aka Gothenburg!)

Karima

>justrunningaround<