



**Karima
Makrof
Berlin Marathon
29 september 2013
3 tim 3 min 43 sek**

Karima Makrof:

Let's start with a brief summary this time:

2 years, 10 marathons, 50 minutes

faster than first marathon in Budapest 2011, almost 20 minutes faster than Berlin 2012, 6 min 38 sec faster than recent PB in Stockholm (June 2013)...

Berlin 2013: 3:03:43!!! New

PB, 2ndbest Swede and 62ndin women all categories...

Could be stopping the story here...but this race deserves a bit more details, right?

Berlin marathon took place on Sunday 29 September. Perfect running conditions, 6°C at start to 13°C at arrival. Started in group D as last year. The race evaporated at a pace unsure I realize even now I could maintain: 3hours 3minutes 43 seconds :)

The objectives were pretty simple: Aim being under 3:10 and all under to be considered as a plus!2013 has been so far a good year from start in Dubai, so why not trying to get sliiiightly faster but mainly enjoying? Expectations had been revised after hurting my Achilles heel in mid-July, impacting on the training and motivation. So really, the “enjoy”-part was the one to focus on...

Started easy and nice (read: slower than expected pace during the first km), looking at the pace-keeper balloon until I realized it was a 3:15 one (and not a 3:00). As the mood was right, the body felt fine and the mind was already close to the cloud, the pace was pretty stable for the first 5km. Had a 1min30sec or so difference with the gun time and I was planning to keep this difference as long as possible. Km10 was reached without any problem. Sun shining. Average pace of 4:14/15 which was feeling smooth and comfortable. Was asked by a giant runner in black what was my time target and when answering under 3:10 he said he would run faster than that. Pause. And if I was continuing this way, I was already way under 3:10. No claim for victory until passing the finish line though! Still a bit to go (well, to run actually!). Passing-by km12, look like I am flying in the roundabout on the photo taken there! Aaaaand smile on the face. By km15 was just not understanding still how I could maintain this pace without having pain anywhere (mostly referring to heel and hamstring having been a bit annoying lately...or for a while actually!). Quick check while getting to km20: body – fine, hydration – fine, mindset – brilliant, smile – still there... so even took a little acceleration towards km21.1 (halfway of the course) and passed it in 1:30:53. Slower than in Stockholm, but who cares really. Not here to get a PB on all distances!

Second half started quite funnily as well, realizing that I had 13.1miles to go when the elites men would be reaching the arrival within 30/33 minutes from now... How fast can this be really? Difficult to get in the head, so skipped the calculations.

As I noticed by km25 or so that sub3 (i.e. under 180 minutes) would no longer be at reach, decided to enjoy FULLY. So get along with singing at almost every music stop, high-fiving the kids as often as possible (even when it meant changing from one side to the other one of the road) and encouraging all the fellow runners looking like agonizing or close to this on the side... OK, around km30 I did feel a bit tired.

Could see that as the tempo had derived a little bit. BUT reaching km32, something just happened. Super powers of some kind I did not really know I had maybe :) Increased a bit the pace and for the last part of the race, did enjoy fully to pass so many runners.

Then it was km40, turn, then another turn, then another one, passing (finally) a female runner and more others. Reached Unter den Linden and there arrived another wind of extra energy (last year it was pain from km34, close to walking by km38 and cramp during the last km...). Passing under Brandenburg Gate (this time I saw it!) and then pushing to the maximum possible to the end. Saw the clock ticking to 3:05:xx right when I crossed the finish line. I was under 3:05 :) My watch indicated 3:03:46 and official time was 3 seconds better :)

A bit of rest, smiles, talk, got my preliminary results showing not only a great time but a great place as well. This is a double "Wow" race!!! Afternoon spent resting a bit and celebrating with nice food :)

btw: almost forgot...there was as well as a new male WR set this Sunday: 2:03:23 by Wilson Kipsang...

Summary: No race can be compared to this one. Dubai can be close actually, when it comes to the pacing and feeling "good-and-happy". But this Sunday, it felt effortless, smooth, enjoyable and just great. Both halves being quite similar in time, I got a better start, better middle and definitely better end than in Stockholm. Smile on the face throughout the race. Body felt great afterwards. Mind in the clouds for a while (and probably still is...). Fully satisfied of the results, regarding the time and the placing. 03:03:43 - 62nd place in one of the World Marathons Majors...and as a bonus, 2nd fastest Swede :)

Nothing comes easily and this was nice rewards for the training and efforts spent so far.

One week of full rest from running now to ensure nice recovery and then time to look ahead what may come next :)

>> Great thanks for the encouragements and support throughout this year. The body may be able to reach far, but if the mind is not there...it won't work for long! So keep on cheering :)

//Kind regards from a cosy-autumny-place on Earth (aka Gothenburg, Sweden)

Karima